

April 2006
Report of ACBL Board of Directors Meetings
Dallas NABC, March 2006

One of the first things you see driving from the airport to downtown Dallas is the Cowboys stadium. After giving it a proper boo, downtown and the hotel was a welcome sight. The Dallas hotel facilities were first rate with all the playing space in the hotel, the hotel staff was responsive and helpful, the weather was delightful and the local volunteers were great. The only complaints I heard were that the hotel is too isolated. There were no restaurants, grocery stores or anything within an easy walk. Those who don't mind walking at least six or more blocks were fine. The light rail station was close, just one stop to an area with a variety of restaurants, at a cost of \$1.00 round trip for seniors.

Frequently we have guests who make presentations to the Board. This time we had two guests telling us about exciting programs. One was from AARP. Our Marketing Department has been exhibiting at their conventions recently. Evidently our booth has drawn the biggest crowds impressing the top management of AARP. They formed a partnership with us and together we are holding an AARP game at five selected tournaments — Alexandria, Chicago NABC, Phoenix, Seattle and Atlanta. At all sites the game is limited to AARP members with less than five masterpoints. Winners will qualify for a final event at the Anaheim AARP convention, October 26-28. Winning pairs in each direction at each tournament will receive three nights' lodging in Anaheim.

The other guest was the creator of Bridgemate — a wireless device that could make pickup slips obsolete. There is one device on each table in play and North enters the contract and result after each round. The results go to a central receiver that is connected to a computer that does the scoring. ACBL is considering using Bridgemate at NABCs and distributing them for units and clubs that wish to purchase them. Obviously with this device, fewer caddies are needed and directors can be assigned to other duties. The initial cost is a consideration and unfortunately I can't remember what it is, but I do remember thinking that it was reasonable.

The Board meetings began with a correction to the minutes regarding the GNT and NAP new residency conditions or contest. A clarification was made that only the Open Flight in the GNT and Flight A in the NAP need to have their applications for an exception forwarded to the Credentials Committee for final approval after both District Directors agree. Approval of both District Directors is sufficient for all lower flights in these events. In all cases if both District Directors do not agree the exception will not be granted. There is no appeal from these decisions.

Most of the time in the meetings was spent on defeating motions (thank goodness in most cases), referring to another committee or deferring to the summer meetings with very little time spent on actually passing new legislation. The request to transfer nine counties in southwest Virginia in our District to District 7, in order to make it practical to participate in NAP and GNT events without making a seven hour drive to the Washington D.C. area, was approved on the consent calendar with no discussion. These requests are almost always approved if the districts and units are in agreement and all the paperwork has been properly filled out which was true in this case.

An important motion we did pass was that of defining a Unit in good standing. The relationship of the ACBL to each of its chartered Units is that of an independent organization. Units must be organized and operated in accordance with the purposes of ACBL and must comply with ACBL Bylaws, rules and regulations, as well as with all governmental laws (national, state, provincial and local), rules and regulations. A Unit must declare that it is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation in good standing or that it is an unincorporated association in good standing as defined by the state or other government authority in which the Unit has its primary place of business. A Unit shall bear sole and complete responsibility and liability for its financial affairs.

Another good thing we did was amend the motion that clubs not using ACBL score to submit their monthly financial and masterpoint reports must pay an additional \$2.00 per game sanction fee to allow Management to

waive the extra fee. The fee will be waived when they believe the extra fee will create a hardship for clubs that hold one to three sessions a week averaging fewer than 10 tables per session.

The second World Junior Individual Championship will be held at the 2007 Summer NABC in Nashville. The requested funds of \$25,000 to host this event were trimmed to \$17,000.

Recently there have been some NABC events that did not have the same starting times each day. Now we have mandated that the first session of each NABC+ event will have the same starting times each day throughout the length of the event with exceptions for the final Sunday. By the way, if anyone noticed the starting time for the Senior Knockout on the Hawaii flyer (10:00 a.m.) that was a mistake and has been corrected to 1:30 p.m.

Several motions were referred to the Masterpoint Committee. Most were reasonable, but then the Board of Governors, at its meeting, passed a motion which will be sent to this committee that is really radical. They want some fraction of a masterpoint given to each board with a clear win in all Board-a-Match events. This is to insure that everyone in the event wins masterpoints since it would be very difficult not to win at least one board. The other motions for this committee are:

- ◇ Making the masterpoint rating and fees for unit and district games competitive and in line with ratings and fees for special games at clubs.
- ◇ Adjusting masterpoint deductions for Flight B and Flight C when the limits are higher than 1000 points for Flight B and 500 points for Flight C.
- ◇ Regional pair events of two sessions or more will receive credit for the average number of tables in I/N pair events and Side game sessions held simultaneously.

An interesting and somewhat radical proposal is to combine the Charity Foundation and the Educational Foundation into a single Foundation. The new Foundation will fund educational, charitable, social scientific and historical endeavors that either promote bridge or are for the benefit of bridge players. This was deferred to the summer in order to get feedback from each of the Foundations.

Some of the ideas/motions we rejected were:

- ♠ Furnishing a trophy for the USA-Canada Friendship game. There would be one game each year on one side of the border beginning in the west and moving east. Permission is not needed from ACBL or the Board of directors to hold such a game. The Board felt it would not be appropriate to furnish the trophy.
- ♠ A motion to eliminate attendance at the Board of Governors meeting by the Board of Directors thereby saving two hotel room nights plus per diem.
- ♠ A requirement that members of the ACBL Laws Commission may not be sitting members of the Board of Directors or ACBL employees.
- ♠ Holding an ACBL junior camp every other year beginning in 2007. Previous camps were WBF camps held in the USA in alternate years. As the last meeting Management indicated they wanted no part of any camp unless the ACBL were totally responsible and the WBF were not involved in any way. So arrangements were made with WBF and a new motion written to reflect these requests. However, Management did a turnabout and decided they did not want any responsibility and that the WBF could be in charge or any other group that wanted to put on this camp. Our CEO made a verbal commitment that ACBL would contribute \$25,000 to a junior bridge camp in 2007. One can only hope that, one way or another, the camp will go on.
- ♠ The ACBL website which lists the all-time top MP holder, will include the names of the deceased. Management did promise to work on this.
- ♠ Instruct the WBF to reduce their dues substantially.

- ♠ Reduce the per diem rate for Hawaii to \$54 per day.
- ♠ Provide two engraved shirts annually to all Tournament Directors who are salaried, full-time or extended part time.
- ♠ Reduce entry fees at NABCs by \$1.00 for all events that are surcharged \$1.50 for the International Fund and make no contribution to that fund.