



## **Memorandum of Discussion**

### **ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting**

**August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

### **Houston Bridge Studio**

#### **Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Present were Jolie Hess-President, Pat Levy-Vice President, Bert Onstott-Secretary, Paul Cuneo, Joyce Ryan, and Bob Dowlen.

Also present for the beginning of the meeting were Jim Woodward-Treasurer, Eric Snow-NABC Chair and District 16 representative, and Betty Starzec, NABC Co-chair.

#### **Guests**

##### **2009 NABC**

##### **Eric Snow & Betty Starzec**

Betty & Eric reported on progress in planning for the NABC.

- The preliminary NABC budget shows total revenues of \$208,500 and net revenues of \$3,500.
- The current cash basis financial statement shows total receipts of \$79,777.54, and disbursements of \$6,350.27.
- A "Go Green" shopping bag made of 100% recyclable material, in one color, with the Houston logo on it will be the main registration gift. The bag costs \$4.25 each. It will be filled with all the papers that we hand out. It will also have a small bottle of hand sanitizer in it, along with a pin and a map provided by the Greater Houston Convention and Visitor's Bureau. The registration bag will probably also include a convention card holder with a Texas flag sticker.
- The Houston Convention and Visitor's Bureau will provide "Welcome to Houston Bridge Players" banners at the airports.
- Carlyne Fox is negotiating with Walgreen's to get \$5,000 worth of candy donated.
- Coasters with our Unit logo and the ACBL logo on them will be given for section top awards. The ACBL pays for section top awards; we get to pick them out.

- A small red & gold amenity bag will be given to I/N players. It will be filled with Band-Aids, antiseptic wipes, and other similar items.
- Memphis has a copy of a letter from the George R. Brown Convention Center to the ACBL stating that we should get 600 parking spaces at \$5/spot/day at spots close to the hotel. At this point, it's unclear where the lots are. Betty is concerned about when the lots close and how the lot operators will know who the bridge players are.

## Minutes of June board meeting

**Bert**

The minutes were approved via on-line poll.

## Treasurer's report

**Jim**

Jim Woodward gave the Treasurer's report. The Unit remains in fine financial condition. Highlights of the Treasurer's report are:

- Total assets are \$174,032.47. This includes \$59,424.27 in NABC checking accounts and CDs, and another \$14,003 which is reserved for the NABC but has yet to be turned over.
- Profit for the year to date is \$14,369.25.
- It appears the Brazos sectional lost a little over \$1,300, which was less than budgeted. This may be the only tournament this year on which we lose so little.
- A check for \$600 was paid to the unit Grand National Teams representatives.
- A deposit of \$3,100 was paid to the Stafford center for the June 2009 tournament. We currently have \$9,550 in deposits outstanding – two to Stafford at \$3,150 each and \$3,250 to the Humble Civic Center.

Motion: **That the Treasurer's report be approved as submitted.**

The motion was seconded and approved.

## Committee Reports

### Awards/Flyers

**Karen**

There was no report, as Karen was absent.

### Bridge in Schools

**Jolie**

Natalie Wernet has agreed to replace Carolyn Fox as Bridge in Schools Coordinator.

Bert met with Charles King on Wednesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss their program for the fall. They want to have Club time at KIPP high school on Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays for an hour from 4:15 to 5:15. They also want to have club time at KIPP Spirit Middle school (near Airport & 288) four days a week from 4:00 to 5:00 pm.

They may also want to continue the KIPP high school intersession classes.

Their school starts August 18<sup>th</sup>; they are looking to start up classes August 25<sup>th</sup>.

This schedule should be better for teaching bridge than the semi-weekly Saturday morning schedule was. It also allows us to apply for the \$350 ACBL teacher stipend, if we get going quickly and follow all the ACBL's rules.

Bonnie Watt, a teacher at Westchester Academy in Spring Branch ISD contacted Joyce Ryan regarding holding bridge classes during their January intersession period. Joyce referred her to Natalie.

**Communications Committee**

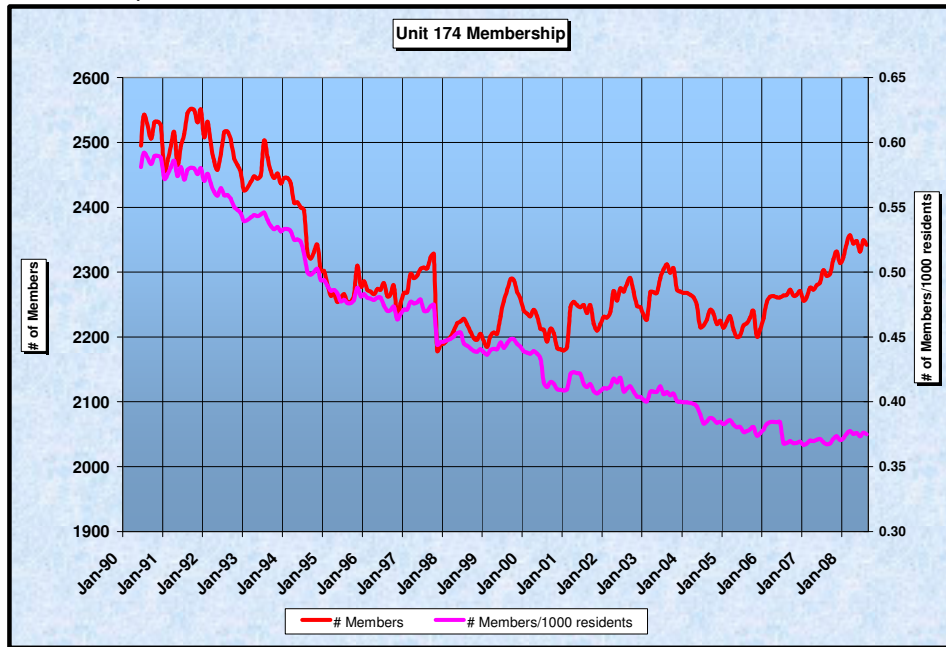
**Jolie (for Betty Freedman)**

Betty sent Jolie a nice report. So far Betty has received no response from the postcards sent to transfers into our unit, but she will continue the effort.

**Membership**

**Bert**

Membership is down 7 to 2342.



**Fund Raising**

**Bob**

Bob reported that we got a check for \$40.82 from the Randall's good neighbor program.

He also had Arlene add a notice about on the Unit web site.

**Goodwill**

**Pat**

Pat sent condolence cards to the families of Betty Lemaster, Pat McCoy and Eugene Hoover, and get well cards to Dottie Ann Goodloe, Natalie Green, and Vic Sitton.

**I/N, Education & Book Sales**

**Joyce**

Joyce reported that she had sold no books this month.

Bill St. Claire will be teaching at his church and will be buying some books for that effort.

**NAP/GNT**

**John**

*NAP*

John drafted contracts to hold the Unit qualifying games with the Bridge Club of Houston and the Houston Bridge Studio.

A flyer for the NAP unit game was prepared.

*GNT*

The date of the Unit championship games for flights B and C (there is no Flight A Unit qualifying game) will be Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

**Motion:** That the Unit level Grand National Teams qualifying games be held at the Houston Bridge Studio.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**New Player Services**

**Paul**

No news.

**Pro-Am**

**Paul**

Paul reported that the letter to the clubs went out; so far BCOH and Clear Lake have responded that they will be participating. The deadline is August 15, 2008 for the clubs to register to participate.

**STAC**

**Bob**

Bob reported that the letters to the club managers were sent out. Several have been returned.

**Supplies**

**Lauri**

There was no report, as Lauri was not present.

**Tournament Coordination**

**Pat**

Pat reported on her Tournament Coordinator activities. She

- Informed Tom Whitesides and Sandy Bippert of the hotel address and phone number of the Super 8 Motel for the August Sectional.
- Received a confirmation letter from the Regency Inn in Humble reserving our hotel rooms and the rate for our directors and caddy master for October Sectional. Room rates are \$59 single and \$69 for double plus tax.
- Received approval from the ACBL for four sectionals for the Houston Bridge Studio for 2009. They will hold two 0-99 sectionals and two 0-299 sectionals.
- Received approval for the four charity games in 2009. They will be held on
  - Saturday, February 28,
  - The evening of Tuesday, April 7,
  - The evening of Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup> and
  - Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Cancelled all the sanctions for the Thursday night club championships and requested 12 daytime unit club championships, distributed evenly across six days of the week, and 3 night time club championships. This should enable all the clubs to benefit. She received all the sanction approvals for those events.

- Received authorization from ACBL to have up to 24 unit games per year; three can be “extended team games”.
- Conferred with John Erickson regarding the date for the Unit GNT qualifying games. We decided that both the Flight B and Flight C games will be held on February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Received approval to change the dates for the Election Sectional to May 1-3.

## Old Business

### August Sectional

**Bert/Pat**

All is in order.

Tables will be placed at 8' spacing to squeeze in sufficient tables.

Pat has a list of the members of the committees who will do Hospitality and Partnership. She has three men in addition to Paul, Bob, and Bert to help put the tables away. We would appreciate the lady members staying to help if possible.

For prizes we are going to offer a choice of two \$1 gold coins or one \$2 bill. The hospitality committee will have the recipients sign when they receive the coins.

### October Sectional

**John/Paul**

- Committee chairs have been chosen. They are:
  - ⇒ Hospitality Chair – Carmen Keys
  - ⇒ Partnership Chair – Donna Frederick
  - ⇒ Caddy Chair – Sandy Stevens
  - ⇒ I/N Chairs – Jim and Frances Simmons
  - ⇒ New Player Services – Paul Cuneo
- The Scorecard ad was sent to Ira Hessel.
- The flyer is done; Bert will print 200 and bring them to the August Sectional.
- The directors will Lucky Snider, Guillermo Poplawski, Robert Craig, John Smalley, and Tom Whitesides.

### On-Line Partnership Desk

**Bert**

Bert reported that the application is close to being ready. The parts that allow the user to register, log in, and create a partnership request are done. The page to allow the user to see others who have requested a partner for the same event remains to be done.

### Contract for Head Caddy

**Jim**

Jim will bring a copy to the sectional and we'll get it signed then.

### Programs for Clubs

**Joyce**

Joyce reported that she's received inquiries about the new club programs from Clear Lake and the Bridge Club of Houston. Marcella Thomas may start up a 0-20 game on Monday at Apple Too.

## **Marriott Renewal Contracts**

**Bert**

Paul and Bert met with Claudia Gorini, Director of Sales & Marketing, and Becky Zendejas, Event Services Manager, at the Marriott Westchase on Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss contracts for 2011 and beyond.

They asked us to consider moving the regional to the week earlier, or perhaps two weeks earlier.

There are lots of Regionals throughout the year across the country and they do tend to conflict with each other. Over time, though, things evolve so that the larger Regionals don't have many others scheduled opposite them, since nobody wants to compete. Houston is definitely one of the largest, so it's not too surprising that there are few other Regionals scheduled during our traditional first week in February time slot.

The same is not true for other weeks. During the week previous to ours, it appears that there are two or three other Regionals scheduled, depending on the year. The week two weeks in advance of ours, there are two others scheduled. During the week after ours, there are two or three others scheduled. None of these are particularly close geographically, but since we draw from all over the US, they will have an impact.

The punch line for us will be that it will be somewhat to our detriment in terms of table count to move from our traditional date. Of course, that's not the only thing we have to consider, so we'd like to look at the costs associated with staying and moving.

Claudia will propose pricing for the original dates, and also for the weeks earlier.

## **Social Bridge**

**Bert**

The committee (the committee consists of Norm Gautier, Gary King, Bert Onstott, Pat Levy, and Dianna Gittleman; the first four were at the meeting) met for the second time on July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- Norm has arranged for the caterer.
- The flyer has been prepared and sent to the printers. The brochure is nearly complete and will be sent to the printers soon. Both qualify for CAP funding, so the ACBL will pay 75% of the cost of printing.
- Gary is in charge of classes; he will recruit the teachers and vet their lesson plans.
- Dianna is in charge of volunteers. We need lots of them to visit the social groups to get the word out, and to serve as 'fifth chairs' at the event.
- The next big effort is to get the publicity ramped up. Pat Levy is in charge of promotion, and to help her we need to build a database of social bridge venues. We have a flyer prepared with a back page that asks everyone to tell Pat about all the social bridge games they are familiar with.
- A web page for on-line registration is in preparation.

Our next meeting is scheduled for August 12<sup>th</sup>.

We've tentatively targeted late March 2009 for our next event.

## **2009 Tournament Sites**

**John**

The April sectional will be moved to May, since we could not find an open date in April. At this point, we plan on

- April (May) – Stafford Center
- June – Stafford Center
- August – Stafford Center
- October - Humble

The idea that perhaps we should not have a June tournament due to the proximity of the NABC and the August tournament was brought up. We have already put down a deposit for that date with the Stafford Center; Bert will look to see if it is refundable.

## 2009/2010 Directory

**Bert**

Whether/how to bind the directory was discussed; a decision was deferred.

Also, whether to put the membership directory on-line, protected by a password and the person's ACBL number was discussed. This would allow us to save by not printing as many directories, and would have the advantage that we could keep it up to date monthly.

## 2009 Lone Star Regional

What to offer for a registration gift was discussed. Options Include: convention card holders, labels, stickers, and pencils with clips. A decision was deferred until next meeting.

Jolie proposed that, since the 2009 LSR is expected to lose money, that we economize by not inviting the ACBL president and CEO this year.

**Motion:** That we not invite the ACBL president or CEO in 2009.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Donna Compton will do the bulletin again.

The committee chairs have been chosen; they are:

- Hospitality – Jane Armstrong
- Partnership – Bert and Katherine Onstott
- Caddies – Sandy Stevens
- I/N – Joyce Ryan
- Publicity – Dianna Gittelman

Space has been reserved for a full page ad in the December bulletin, and a 1/6 page ad in the January bulletin.

Ads in the Boston NABC daily bulletin have been arranged for. Jolie will be working with Brent Manley on the contents of the ads.

## New Business

### Proposals for District 16 Charity

The district gets to distribute \$100,000 of ACBL charity foundation money in 2009. The Unit may nominate charities to receive the funds.

**Motion:** That the Unit submit *Blue Bird Circle* and *Texas Hearing and Service Dogs* as recipients for the District 16 Charity.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Joyce will write a letter to the District proposing these as charities.

### **Caddy expenses**

**Bert**

Sandy Stevens reported that she's planning on one fewer caddy for August.

### **Future Meeting dates**

Future board meeting dates are September 8<sup>th</sup>, October 6<sup>th</sup>, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, December 1<sup>st</sup>, and January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

### **Executive Session**

The board spent 15 minutes in executive session.

### **Adjourn**

**Motion:** That the meeting be adjourned.

The motion was seconded and approved at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted



Bert Onstott