



## Memorandum of Discussion

### ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting

July 7, 2008

### Houston Bridge Studio

#### Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Present were Jolie Hess-President, Bert Onstott-Secretary, Karen Nimmons, John Erickson, Paul Cuneo, Lauri Laufman and Bob Dowlen.

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

#### Guests

##### 2009 NABC and District 16

**Eric Snow**

##### *District 16*

Eric Snow reported on happenings in the District meeting at the July Regional in Austin.

- Nominations for the Jacoby award were due July 1; this deadline was missed by our unit. Nominations for the Texas STAR award are due December 31<sup>st</sup>. Nominations for the Unit Goodwill awards are due December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- In 2009 the District can choose who should receive \$20,000 of the National Charity committee's money. This will probably be subdivided among four or five recipients. Nominations for recipients should be made in time for the District board to discuss during the Labor Day Regional in Dallas, which basically means the board must decide on nominations during the August meeting. The presentations of the funds are scheduled for the NABC.
- On a related note, the 2009 Houston NABC can donate \$5,000 of the Charity foundations' funds to a charity of their choice; the NABC committee has chosen MD Anderson to be the recipient.
- Sally Blewett is the new publicity chair for the District.

- The costs for the Scorecard are going up; typically the Scorecard has lost about \$6,000 per year, but this year the loss is up to \$8,000. In response to this, the District board has chosen to
  1. increase the Unit surcharge from \$0.40/member to \$0.50/member,
  2. limit unit columns to 1000 words, and
  3. change the default for getting electronic copies from 'opt in' (you only get electronic copies if you specifically request it), to 'opt out' (you'll automatically get electronic copies unless you request to receive paper copies). Starting March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009, only those who specifically request a paper copy of the Scorecard will get one.
- The Mexico tournament will be held in Puerto Vallarta November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009.
- For the past several years, the District has collected \$1 for each entry sold on Saturday at District 16 regionals to benefit future District NABC tournaments. Historically there has been a District 16 NABC about every three years, but after next March, there are no more scheduled. Consequently, the question has been raised as to whether the District should continue to collect the \$1, and if so, what to do with the funds. District President Larry Davis has formed a committee to study the issue.

#### *NABC*

A meeting of all committee chairs is scheduled for July 16 at 2:30. Dividing the available funds among the several committees will be one of the agenda items.

There has been an issue around turnover of the \$1 collected at Unit tournaments to the NABC committee. The Unit has collected about \$14,000 which cannot be turned over at this point without cashing in a CD early. The CD matures in November, which is when the funds will be made available to the NABC committee.

### **Minutes of June board meeting**

**Bert**

**Motion:** That the June minutes be approved as written.

The motion was seconded and approved.

### **Treasurer's report**

**Jim**

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

- Total current assets are \$122,533.30; net income for the year to date is \$13,207.27 (this includes \$14,003 collected for the NABC).
- There has been an issue around disposition of the \$1 collected at Unit tournaments for the NABC; the Unit has collected \$14,003 which is reserved cash for the NABC, but since there is only about \$5,600 in the Unit checking account, that amount can't be turned over at this point without cashing in a CD early. The CD's mature in November; these funds plus any amounts collected during the August and October sectionals will be made available to the NABC committee after the CD's mature.
- Jim noted that we have over \$7,000 tied up in deposits at the Stafford and Humble centers for future tournament sites; historically this has been much smaller.

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

The motion was seconded and approved.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Awards/Flyers**

**Karen**

#### *Awards*

Karen reported that she ordered two Life Master Plaques this month; she has ordered a total of 8 since the Unit prepaid for 100 in May of 2008.

#### *Flyers*

Karen sent out flyers for the August sectional to all the Unit clubs. She will send about 20 flyers each to tournaments in Metairie, LA, Tyler, TX, Austin, TX, Lake Charles, LS, Lubbock, TX, Waco, TX, and Council Bluffs, IA. She will also send some to these out of Unit clubs: Bridge Academy of North Dallas, Valley View Bridge Club, Denton Bridge Studio, Beaumont Bridge Studio, Bridge Center of Austin, Arlington DBC, Rockport Duplicate Club, Turtle Creek DBC, and Victoria Daylight DBC.

### **Bridge in Schools**

**Jolie**

Carolyn Fox has resigned as Bridge in Schools Coordinator and turned over the inventory of books and materials to Lauri.

We need a volunteer to take her place. The board agreed to ask Arlene to post something on the Unit web site and put a request in her newsletter. Bert will draft a notice and send it to Arlene.

### **Communications Committee**

**Jolie (for Betty Freedman)**

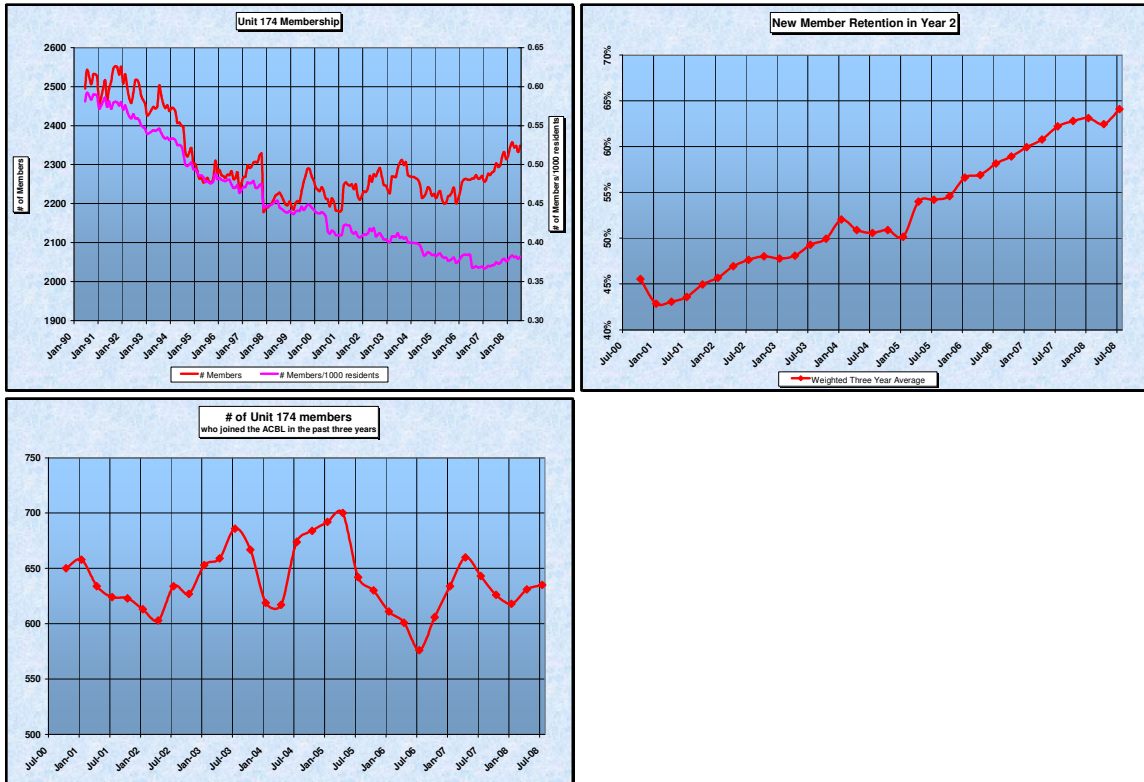
Jolie received a nice report from Betty.

Betty noted that one of the biggest problems the committee has is that when new members move into the area, the ACBL still has their old telephone numbers, making it impossible to reach these new members by phone. But it is generally the case that the member's new address is correct. Betty requested permission to purchase postcards to send to these members, welcoming them to the unit. The board agreed.

## Membership

Bert

Membership is up 17 to 2349. The trend is up for membership, retention and new members, as can be seen in the following charts.



## Fund Raising

Bob

Bob noted that many members are unfamiliar with the Randall's Good Neighbor program, which donates a portion of purchases at Randall's stores to the Unit if the member requests it. Bob agreed to ask Arlene to put something on Unit web site about the program.

## Goodwill

Pat

There was no report, as Pat was not present.

## I/N, Education & Book Sales

Joyce

Joyce sold 37 books this month to Iva Kemp, Laura Lee Jones, Dave Glandorf, Barbara Delozier and Betty Freedman. Betty is investigating the possibility of teaching bridge at her condo.

## NAP/GNT

John

NAP

Kevin Perkins will direct the Unit games in November. John will ask Arlene to prepare a paper flyer and have about 500 printed. Karen will send them to all the Unit clubs.

GNT

No news.

## **New Player Services**

**Paul**

Paul reported that volunteers are lined up for the Stafford tournament.

## **Pro-Am**

**Paul**

Paul reported that the letter to the clubs announcing the Pro-Am is ready to go. Paul will send it to Bert, who will send it to all the Unit clubs.

## **STAC**

**Bob**

Bob has prepared the letter inviting clubs to participate in the September STaC. There have been two issues raised: 1) whether to allow playing directors, and 2) whether to send the hand records to persons who will play in the game(s).

**Motion:** That non-playing directors be required in all Unit STaC games.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**Motion:** That hand records for a STaC game must be received by a person who will not play in the game.

The motion was seconded, but was defeated with 4 No votes and 3 Yes votes.

Bob agreed to edit the letter accordingly and send it out for further review.

## **Supplies**

**Lauri**

All is in order.

## **Tournament Coordination**

**John/Pat**

As reported in last month's minutes sanctions have been ordered for 15 Club Championships and 5 Charity games in 2009. There will be 12 daytime and 3 evening club championships and three daytime and two evening charity games, which is a change from having most of these in the evening. This was not formalized by a motion in June. Hence:

**Motion:** That the allocation of the club championships and charity club championships as described in last month's minutes be approved.

The motion was seconded and approved.

## **Old Business**

### **June Sectional**

**Lauri**

- The table count was up about 20% from 207 ½ to 250 ½.
- The tournament will incur a small loss of about \$1,400.
- The silent auction raised about \$1,200 for the 2009 NABC.
- The hotels were adequate, but we may look at an alternate to using the Inn at Chimney Hill next time.
- All in all, it was a very well run tournament. Thanks to Lauri and Barbara for all their hard work!

## **August Sectional**

**Bert/Pat**

- Snack bar services have been arranged for; the Stafford Municipal School District Choir Boosters Club will be doing the snack bar.
- It was requested that the ACBL send an e-mail announcing the tournament to Districts 10, 15 and 16; the e-mail went out on June 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Karen sent flyers to all the local clubs and they were taken to Bryan and Austin.
- Pat is organizing setup and breakdown committees.
- Lauri and John will both be gone for the August sectional. Bert and Bob will handle supplies for the tournament in their absence.

## **October Sectional**

**John/Paul**

John reported that a flyer is in preparation. Paul will obtain volunteers for partnership and hospitality chairs.

## **On-Line Partnership Desk**

**Bert**

Bert has been working on it; it's about half built at this point.

Steve Bruce (District web master) has been asked if the district web server would be able to support it (PHP and MySQL will need to be available on the web server, as will the necessary space); and he said he'd check, but at this point an answer has not been received.

A simple outline of the system is as follows:

1. The player would register, providing the following information:
  - e-mail address,
  - password,
  - telephone number,
  - masterpoints,
  - preferred bidding system,
  - other bidding systems played, and
  - specific conventions played.
2. The player would log in using their e-mail address and password.
3. The player would create a partnership request, specifying the event for which a partner is desired. An event is defined by the site, type of game, date and time of the event, e.g., August sectional, open pairs, Saturday at 1:30 or Bridge Club of Houston, 499r, Tuesday, 7:00 pm.
4. The player would check on potential matches. The system would find any other partnership requests for the same event, compute a match score by comparing the two individuals' profiles, and present the player with a list of potential matches on order of match score.
5. The player can select one of these and either call or e-mail the other person.

## **Contract for Head Caddy**

**Jim**

The contract was sent to Sandy; she called to say she had received it.

## **Programs for Clubs**

**Joyce**

Joyce has not heard from any clubs regarding the new programs and think that fall will be a more likely time for clubs to start up new programs. Marcella Thomas is thinking about something at her Monday afternoon game.

Joyce sent the programs as an attachment to all teachers on her list; this included Donna Compton who gave it a huge thumbs up.

## **Marriott Renewal Contracts**

**Bert**

### *Contract for 2009*

John went to the Marriott and signed the 2009 hotel contract. It hasn't yet been signed by the Marriott due to personnel change at the hotel, but that is not perceived as a problem.

### *Contracts for 2011 and beyond*

Gary Bernard, our previous contact has moved to another hotel; we are now dealing with Claudia Gorini, Director of Sales & Marketing at the Marriott Westchase.

Gary had wanted us to consider moving the regional to coincide with spring break, the third week in March, since that's a better time for the hotel. I looked at that, and it isn't feasible, mainly due to the Spring Nationals.

I communicated that to Claudia, who said she'd work with us. We have a tentative (subject to Claudia's approval) meeting arranged with her to hear what the hotel has to offer for July 25<sup>th</sup> at 4:00.

## **2009 Tournament Sites**

**John**

John has been working hard to find sites for the 2009 sectionals.

At this point we don't have a site for the April tournament. The Stafford Center is tentatively reserved for June and August. The Humble Civic center is reserved for October.

Some of the sites that have been looked at for April are:

- The Stafford center. The weekend of the tournament (April 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>) has already been booked by another group.
- The Junior League. It has insufficient space.
- The George R. Brown. It charges too much for parking.
- The Berry Center. Bill St. Clair has agreed to look into it once again.
- The Ramada Plaza Hotel at I-10 and Post Oak is a possibility. They have 9,000 sq. ft. and would charge \$2,000/day. They have free parking, and chairs are free. One problem is that the space is not contiguous, but divided up into two spaces (one space is 3,500). We can bring in an outside caterer for Sunday lunch and for the snack bar, or the hotel can provide these.

- The SPJST, a fraternal organization, has a hall in central Houston. But they hold dances the first three Saturday nights of every month, making their site unavailable on those weekends.

We may have to move the April tournament from its planned dates to later in April, or even early May, but we would have avoid Easter weekend, which is April 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>, and Gatlinburg starts April 19<sup>th</sup>.

## 2009/2010 Directory

**Bert**

### *Correcting information*

A copy of the ACBL's current info has been printed and put in a binder. The binder was taken to Bryan, and has been out at the Houston Bridge Studio. It will be taken to the August and October tournaments. Paul agreed to take it to Tracy Gee and make a suitable announcement.

We need to make it clear that writing changes in the book doesn't accomplish anything, though. That message has to be made clear, and it's going to take lots of repetition. A flip chart will be used at the tournaments to deliver that message. The hospitality chairs will also deliver the message.

### *Binders*

A discussion took place around whether/how to have the directories bound. Here are some options, with approximate pricing:

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1. GBC binding   | \$1.00 each |
| 2. Spiral binding  | \$1.25 each |
| 3. White loose leaf notebook binders                           | \$4.25 each |
| 4. Special loose leaf notebook binders (like what we have now) | \$5.00 each |

Last time each book cost \$2.89 to cut, collate, drill and print, and we made 1,600 of them.

A decision was deferred until the August meeting.

### *Publication Frequency*

As a possible cost saving measure, it has been suggested that we make the directory available on-line to Unit members, protected by a password. We could have a "MyUnit174" area on the Unit web site comparable to "MyACBL" on the ACBL web site.

This would allow us to dramatically cut the number of directories that need to be printed, and would allow keeping the list up to date monthly. A decision was deferred until the August meeting.

## New Business

### Awards nominations

**Jolie**

#### *Jacoby Service award*

We will not make a nomination this year, as the deadline has passed.

#### *Texas Star Award*

We need to make a nomination by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### *Unit Goodwill Members of the Year*



We can nominate two unit members by Dec 31<sup>st</sup>.

## Caddy expenses

Bert

It has been noted by several tournament directors that we are spending more on caddies than is necessary. There is an ACBL caddy manual that includes recommendations for how many caddies are needed. The Unit procedures manual has sections for Caddy chair responsibilities for Sectionals and the Regional, but these sections have never been completed. Paul agreed to draft initial versions of these sections for review by the board and by the Caddy Chair.

## Approve revision 13 to procedures manual

All

**Motion:** That revision 13 of the Unit Procedures Manual be approved.

The motion was seconded and approved.

## 2009 Lone Star Regional

### *Named event sales*

In the past, we've charged \$50 for a single session, \$100 for a double session, and \$150 for a four or five session event. It was agreed that we would keep this pricing for 2009.

### *Ads for 2009 Regional in the NABC Daily Bulletins*

Jolie proposed that we plan to put ads for the 2009 Lone Star Regional in the Boston NABC daily bulletins. A 1/6 page ad costs \$75/day; a 10" by 2 1/2" ad costs \$125/day. The board agreed that this would be a good idea.

**Motion:** That we place a 10" by 2 1/2" ad for the 2009 Lone Star Regional in the Boston NABC daily bulletin for five days.

The motion was seconded and approved.

### *TAP and Director's courses*

We will not have TAP and director's courses in 2009 due to the proximity of the NABC.

### *Registration gifts*

The board discussed what would be given out as hospitality gifts. Possibilities that were discussed include mechanical pencils, convention card holders, pencils and pencil clips, and stickers. No decision was made.

## Future Meeting dates

Future board meeting dates are August 4<sup>th</sup>, 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 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bert R. Onstott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and 'O'.

Bert Onstott