

**American Contract Bridge League District 16
Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors Held July 2, 2011**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of District 16 of the American Contract Bridge League was held at the Omni San Antonio Hotel in San Antonio, Texas at 8:15 a.m. on July 2, 2011.

Board members present (Units represented in parentheses): Ira Hessel (172), Guillermo Poplawsky (173), Bert Onstott (174), Bob Butterfield (176), Carol Schoenhals (197), Sally Blewett (201), Neal Perlman (204), Norinne Nelson (205), Jo Smith (224) and David Pennington (233).

Committee Chairs and others present: Dan Morse (District representative to the ACBL Board of Directors), Betty Starzec (District Representatives to the ACBL Board of Governors), Paul Cuneo (Education Committee Chair), James Thurtell (Disciplinary Committee Chair), Jim Bauer (Grand National Teams Coordinator), Dorsey Shaw (Intermediate/Novice Committee Chair), Melody Euler (North American Pairs Coordinator), Tom Whitesides (Tournament Coordinator), Jonathan Ernest (Appellate Committee Chair), Melody Euler (NAP Coordinator), Lew Levy (Executive Treasurer), Elizabeth Hudson (Unit 183), Robert Mainard (Unit 201) and Deborah Brookings (Unit 209).

President Dewitt Hudson called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of the Board held January 29, 2010, were approved as presented to the meeting.

District Director: Dan Morse reported that the search is continuing for a replacement for Jay Baum, who is retiring in 2012 as the Executive Director of the ACBL. He noted that Jay is willing to work with his successor to help ensure a smooth transition. He also reported that District 18 will use Bridge Base Online to conduct on-line play for some of its Grand National Teams qualifying games.

Executive Treasurer: Lew Levy presented the Executive Treasurer's Report for the second quarter of 2011, including the District's Profit and Loss Statement for the six months ended June 30, 2011 and its Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2011. The Report noted that (i) revenues exceeded expenses by \$2,393 in the period (which represents a decrease from the same period in 2010, primarily because there were fewer Regional tournaments this year), (ii) that the Puerto Vallarta Regional, scheduled for the second half of this year, should generate surplus revenues, (iii) the Scorecard continues to run at a smaller deficit than in prior years, (iv) the balance sheet shows that the District's financial position is strong, (v) money market rates are still extremely low so the short-term CDs

originally purchased in 2009 continue to be rolled over as they mature, and (vi) accounts receivable may appear to be high but this will be corrected when the fees from the District StaC are deposited. The Treasurer's Report was accepted as presented.

Collegiate Championships: Dewitt Hudson presented information received from the ACBL concerning the upcoming 2011 Collegiate Bridge Championships (at which a team from the University of Texas will be one of the nine teams competing for the championship), the schedule for qualifying, and other events relating to the 2012 Collegiate Bridge Championships. Dewitt asked Board members to discuss the collegiate bridge championships program with colleges in their area.

Plaque Presentation: Dewitt Hudson presented a plaque to Sally Blewett honoring Unit 201 for increasing its membership by more than 10%.

Charity: Carol Schoenhals reported that a District-wide charity game is scheduled for August 22, 2011, and that another is tentatively scheduled for October 21, 2011. She also noted that District 16 should be receiving funds from the ACBL in 2013 or 2014 to distribute to charities located within the District.

Education: Paul Cuneo reported that San Antonio held a Teacher Accreditation Program course at the current Regional, and that 17 students attended. The District shared the net expenses of the course with Unit 172, with the cost to the District being \$377. He stated that he has discussed with the Dallas and Corpus Christi Units potential teacher appreciation events at their Regionals this Fall which could be partially funded with funds allocated by the District for this purpose. He also noted that the 2012 Houston Regional will offer Audrey Grant's Better Bridge Teacher Training Seminar which will be taught by Donna Compton.

Grand National Teams: Jim Bauer reported that 51 teams participated in the GNT District finals this year, a modest increase over the 47 teams that participated last year. In an effort to increase participation in the District finals of the GNT Superflight, he suggested that this event be held next year at the Dallas March Sectional. After discussion, a motion to do so was approved. Jim also stated that he is working on an overall plan to increase participation in future GNT competitions in the District. He next led a discussion concerning the amount of the subsidy provided by the District to District GNT winners who participate in the GNT national championships. After discussion, a motion to increase this subsidy, beginning this year, to \$1,500 per team was approved.

North American Pairs: Melody Euler reported that the 2011/2012 NAP cycle began June 1, with club qualifications from June through August. Units are encouraged to submit information on their Unit NAP finals by July 4, with a deadline of August 15. The District final will be held at the San Antonio Sectional on January 15-16, 2012. In the last NAP cycle, club participation in District 16 was up between 18% and 25% in each flight. At the District level, participation was up 50% in Flight C, 14% in Flight B and 12% in Flight A. As a way to generate increased participation, Melody suggested that our District provide subsidies to the top finishers in each flight in the District who

participate in the national finals. After discussion, a motion was approved to provide subsidies of \$300 per person to the top three pairs in each flight in the 2012-2013 cycle. These subsidies will be in addition to the subsidies provided by the ACBL and will result in the following subsidies being payable (by the District and the ACNL combined) for each flight: 1st place pairs - \$1,000 to each person; 2nd place pairs - \$600 to each person; and 3rd place pairs - \$300 to each person.

Intermediate/Novice: Dorsey Shaw encouraged all Units to push mentor games as a way to encourage developing players. She also suggested that “bring a buddy to bridge” games (where both partners play for free) and ice cream socials to introduce social players to duplicate games are good ideas. She solicited other suggestions to encourage and support I/N players. Betty Starzec noted that the ACBL website has helpful information on mentor/ mentee games.

Membership: Bert Onstott distributed a proposal for increasing District 16 membership. It stated that the Units are the only groups that can effectively plan and execute programs to increase Unit membership. These programs should focus on attracting new members and retaining existing members. With respect to attracting new players, the most promising group to try to reach are those who already play bridge but have not made the transition to duplicate or have not joined the ACBL. Some approaches that have worked are: (i) holding “introduction to duplicate events, (ii) visiting rubber bridge groups and inviting them to local clubs and tournaments, and (iii) advertising local events, coverage of winners of local events in local media, and other local publicity. With respect to retention of existing members, Bert suggested implementation of various items, including the following: (i) enforcing zero tolerance policies, (ii) having limited point games available for newcomers, (iii) supporting mentor- mentee games at clubs, and (iv) having active teacher programs for beginners. Bert suggested that each Unit should set a membership goal that is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. In addition, each Unit should agree on a plan of action that sets out the specific steps it will take to achieve the membership goal it establishes. After discussion, a motion was approved to request each Unit within the District to adopt, by the 2011 Labor Day Regional in Dallas, a membership goal and an action plan to achieve it.

Publicity: Sally Blewett noted that Craig Robinson, the President of the ACBL, will be visiting Texas clubs in August, and encouraged all Units that he is visiting to try to get his visits publicized.

Tournaments. Tom Whitesides reported that the extra Regionals in 2012 would be held in Lubbock in the Spring and in Beaumont in the Fall and that in 2013 they would be held in Tyler in the Spring and in Abilene in the Fall.

Mexico. Norinne Nelson reported that they hope to have an online partnership desk working for the next Puerto Vallarta Regional.

Scorecard: Ira Hessel stated that it is important that all Units submit photos of winners , particularly of special events.

Unit Reports: Carol Schoenhals reported that “8 is enough” games are very successful in Unit 197. Sally Blewett reported that a new club has started operation in Unit 201. In addition, Unit 201 is forming a 499er tournament for the first time in several years. They have three active teachers in their Unit now.

Dewitt Hudson recognized and commended Unit 172 for the excellent work done in putting on the San Antonio Regional.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.