

District Director Report – July 2018

Atlanta and the Marriott Marquis were great hosts for the NABC. Table count was 11,268.5 just over the 11,200 projected in the budget. The playing rooms were spacious and well lit and the temperature was comfortable.

Congratulations to Phil Clayton of Frisco, Tx and his partner Andrew Gumperz for their victory in the 0 – 10,000 Pairs event!

The motion I co-sponsored to impose term limits for the Board of Directors passed its 2nd reading and was ratified by the Board of Governors. Effective January 1, 2019, board members will be limited to four three-year terms. Terms started prior to that date are not counted.

Technical changes to the ACBL Bylaws to conform to recent changes in New York law were also passed by the Board and ratified by the Board of Governors.

The motion I sponsored to allow Open Sectional events to count tables from a concurrent Non-Life Master Regional passed its 2nd reading and will take effect immediately.

The Board voted to extend the Zero Tolerance policy to all tournaments which require an ACBL employee to be the Director in Charge. Thus, Open Sectionals that are played at Club facilities will have ZT regulations as the DIC is required to be an ACBL Tournament Director.

Masterpoint awards for the NAP and GNT District finals were increased for all levels of competition. There were a lot of technical cleanup motions relating to bridge were passed. Most were unanimous.

On Thursday, July 26, the Strategic Review Committee held an all-day workshop to discuss some key topics which have emerged as we are updating the Strategic Plan. In addition to the Board of Directors and the Leadership Team from Headquarters, we invited the ACBL Educational Foundation Board of Trustees and some guests. They were Uday Ivatury, CEO of Bridge Base Online, Sam Marks, a teacher and club owner in the Atlanta area, Steve Moese, Chairman of the Board of Governors Club and Teacher Taskforce, and Betty Starzec of D16, President of the American Bridge Teachers Association. I'll be writing more about this work in future reports.

Our search for a new Executive Director is underway as we've published an advertisement in the August edition of the Bridge Bulletin and in the NABC Daily Bulletin in Atlanta. The Search Committee, which I chair, has been re-working the search process and are ready to begin evaluating resumes and conducting interviews.

I was nominated to join the Board of Trustees of the ACBL Educational Foundation, and was elected to serve at their meeting in Atlanta. The Educational Foundation became independent in December, 2016. During the Atlanta meeting Sharon Anderson led an exercise to begin a

Strategic Planning process for the Foundation and we'll pursue it over the next several meetings. I'm excited about the opportunity to serve and work as a member of the Foundation's Board.

One thing that I like to do is to have players tell me their stories. This is from Jim La Fountain who recently made Emerald Life Master:

"I got my first masterpoint in 1977 playing with my mom. I'd played canasta, pinochle, 42 and now started playing the best game ever.

My mom and dad, Jane and Joe La Fountain, had played for years. After my dad passed away, I started playing with my mom. As we started winning, some of the better players asked me to play. I was so lucky to get to play with and learn from all of them. However, my mom stayed my favorite partner and then one day Richard Ware asked me to play. He became my best friend and my favorite partner and we still play today.

It's the partners that make this game so special. Even today I am playing with new partners and play with many newer players. I would like to pay back for the lessons I got and work with my novice partners to improve their games.

A favorite bridge story is when my mom, Lee Merriwitz, Waymon Hunt and I won a big team event. We played some very tough teams to get the win. Waymon was so proud in the picture to be the tallest person at 5'6"!!! The thrill of winning in the greatest game of them all!!!"