

Scorecard Article – August, 2019

The Cosmopolitan Hotel in Las Vegas provided a great venue for the NABC which had 13,622 tables; very close to the 13,500 estimate. Congratulations to the Flight B GNT winners:

Suvabrata Biwas, Pawel Hanus, Bill McCarty, Wes Peirce, Thomas Rush and Ari Sippola!!!

The ACBL Board decided to vacate all 1st and 2nd place finishes in NABC+ events for either pairs or teams where members have been convicted of collusive cheating after August 22, 2015 which is the date that Boye Brogelund went public with his allegations of cheating. After spirited discussion it was decided the titles would remain vacated rather than advancing pairs or teams to the vacated positions.

The Board also passed a motion eliminating the Temporary Membership program and establishing a free Guest Membership program. The Temporary Membership program had not achieved its objectives and the predominant use was by individuals who attend tournaments to use a temporary membership to reduce their costs of tournament play. The Guest Membership allows people to have digital access to the Bridge Bulletin and to accumulate masterpoints in sanctioned play. Since it's free, we hope to see an increase in enrollment by teachers and higher conversion of students to full membership in the long run. The program is effective January 1, 2020

The Board approved a motion to designate the month of February for special games at clubs to benefit the ACBL Educational Foundation. This action will help the Foundation continue to expand programs which are jointly sponsored with ACBL such as the Collegiate program which is growing rapidly.

The Board Restructuring proposal was reviewed and we agreed to have more work on bridge issues done by committees staffed by members recommended by the Board of Governors. The Governance Committee of which I'm a member will be developing motions for San Francisco. This is a first step towards restructuring the work of the Board.

A presentation by MBA students from Arkansas State University was made on strategic issues for ACBL. During the Board discussion which followed, the Board committed to developing a Strategic Plan and commissioned four teams of Board and Staff to work on Membership Growth, Tournaments, Membership Participation focusing on our newer members and Social Bridge between now and San Francisco. The teams will report to the Strategic Initiatives Committee, which I chair.

The ACBL Educational Foundation Board also met in Las Vegas. New officers are Joel Kramer President, Robert Todd Vice President, Paul Cuneo Treasurer and Jane Champion Secretary. The Foundation is actively partnering with ACBL and the American Bridge Teachers Association (ABTA) to grow the number of people playing bridge and help ACBL grow membership. The

Foundation is contributing \$35,000 for a new website being built by ACBL to interest people in learning bridge and working with ABTA to create education networks in communities so that interested people will be contacted by teachers and have opportunities to enroll in lessons to learn bridge.

Robert Todd reported on a survey the Ed Foundation commissioned through Survey Monkey of people 45 and over with some college education. There are about 70 million people in that category in the U.S. Of those, the survey found that about 15 million said they knew how to play bridge. Of those, 5 million have played in the past year with 2 million actively playing at least monthly. Of those who do not play, 20% or about 14 million say they would be interested in learning to play. Clearly the challenge will be to identify these people and help them find teachers. The new website should be a big help and we'll also be working on expanding out social media presence.

I hope each of you have a great fall season at the tables and look forward to talking with you as I visit tournaments and clubs.