



# BOARD MEETING REPORT

Fall 2016  
Orlando

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*The Orlando Committee put on a great NABC. This represented one of our "destination" NABCs and folks seemed to enjoy the easy access to Disney World and first class accommodations. Others were less pleased with Disney meal prices. Our Spring NABCs cater to the smaller-scale Midwest cost-consciousness and we continue to sell out both types and keep everyone happy some of the time! I stayed an extra day to be able to take in Epcot and Disney Hollywood, the 2 parks right by the Dolphin and had a great time acting like a big kid...I resisted wearing mouse ears, however. 😊 I also enjoyed a farewell night out with the women of the Board at the Taverna Opa where we dined on Greek food family style and **SOMEONE** joined in on the entertainment.*

## Big Win for District 11

Mary Jane and Michael Gladfelter of Columbus won the 0-10,000 Fast Pairs held on the second Th/Fri of the NABC. Please read the story of their strong comeback to win the event in the Daily Bulletin. Congratulations Gladfelters!

<http://cdn.acbl.org/nabc/2016/03/bulletins/db9.pdf>



## Online Regional Experiment

After a promising test in Tampa, the Board authorized Management to continue to experiment with holding online events at Regional tournaments, using strict guidelines, for a period of two years, and report to the Board of Directors thereafter. Basically, Regionals would be authorized to hold events in which pairs can participate remotely. The remote locations would be bridge clubs where play would be monitored...similar to the way people are now able to take online exams at monitored locations. All pairs at all locations play the same hands at the same time. Other Districts could participate with the permission of the host District. The ACBL will track and moderate conflicts. I have rarely been as excited by a Board action as I was by this one. By making Regional events accessible to our many players who can no longer comfortably travel nor, say, play at night, remote monitored play opens a vast new future for our League.



## ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

**Bob Heller of District 7 (Southeast) was elected ACBL President for 2017. As DD for our second-largest District, Bob and his wife Barbara welcome**



**many people from our District to Gatlinburg every year...and they assure us that Gatlinburg will go on as always despite the recent tragic events. Merlin Vilhauer was re-elected as WBF representative for a three-year term; Nancy Erickson of District 22 was appointed as the Nadine Wood Volunteer of the Year; Eldon Clayman of District 7 was appointed the Aileen Osofsky Goodwill Member of the Year and Eddie Wold appointed the ACBL Honorary Member of the Year.**



## FINANCE

The 2017 operating budget showing a projected excess of revenue over expenses of \$234,283 and the 2016 capital budget of \$355,750 were received. The budgets are not finally approved until the Spring Meeting. The budget includes significant funds to be allocated to FINALLY securing the safety and usability of ACBLScore. The Finance Committee recommended and the Board concurred that as much of any excess of revenue of expenditure as possible be applied to rebuilding the Reserve Fund. Management anticipates that, with the help of the new funds from the BBO contract, we will be able to contribute \$500K over each of the next two years, bringing the reserve up to around \$6M.

The operating budget reflects a new fee structure for dues, effective 4/1/16, increasing new member dues by \$10 IF they only join for a year...if they join for 3 years, they reap significant savings and the annual cost is the same as now. This is an excellent and long overdue marketing strategy. The ACBL spends big bucks on chasing down one-year renewals...this system puts us in line with virtually all of the other

memberships and subscriptions we all have--a win for members and a win for administrative costs—thus a double win for members! If you would like to see the complete schedule of dues increases, please let me know and I'll get it to you.

The Board took several other actions aimed at both improving Board efficiency and saving money. The most important of these was to change the END day of the Spring and Summer Board meetings to the day before the Board of Governors meeting. Currently, Board Members arrive on the Sunday before the NABC and meet Monday through Thursday. As they are required to attend the BOG meeting on Sunday morning, their expenses are paid until Sunday. Although most Board Members participate in many other meetings on Friday and Saturday, that is neither required nor consistent. By changing the Board meeting to start on Wednesday (or Thursday if a shorter meeting is required), hotel and per diem for both Board and staff are saved for those 2 days. The big hit for Board Members is that they will no longer be able to play in the opening weekend events. They are, after all, volunteers and bridge players. Nevertheless, the Board adopted this cost-saving measure.

A related motion to suggest that meetings should routinely be held to 3 rather than 4 days did not pass, but the incoming President, Bob Heller, has indicated that he will voluntarily do so next year. Days can be reduced by restricting the number of Committees that meet face to face and requiring them to complete their tasks through electronic means prior to the meeting. Another related motion to have the Board permanently shift its Fall meeting to headquarters outside Memphis, thus saving staff travel and releasing staff to their families for Thanksgiving, also failed, but was sent back to the BOD for reconsideration by the BOG.

I sponsored all of these motions and am pleased that this progress was made...especially in view of the unlikelihood that the Board Composition Committee's recommendations for reducing Board size will be enacted.



. As most of you know, this is my last report. AJ Stephani takes over January 1<sup>st</sup> and I know he will do a great job—it's hard not to when you represent the best District in the ACBL. 😊 It has been an incredible privilege to serve as your District Director for the last nine years. Although the work was tougher than I expected, the rewards of learning and friendships have more than made up for it. I hope that those of you who I have met through this job will stay in touch and that you all continue to both enjoy and work for the future of our glorious game.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO YOU ALL AND SEE YOU IN INDY!

BETH



### OTHER ACTIONS

The Finance Committee recommended and the Board agreed to rescind the \$1 Special Game surcharge effective 4/16/16 **FOR STaCs ONLY.**

Both the Wager Women's KO Teams and the Machlin Women's Swiss Teams were removed from the Summer and Spring NABC schedules respectively, due to consistently low participation the last few years. In the Summer, a Wager Women's Pair event was added.

A motion to eliminate online points from the Lifetime Masterpoint List (the ONLY list on which online points are included) failed.

A motion to have hand records in NABC+ events be used ONLY in those and concurrent national events (e.g., Blue Ribbon and Mini-Blues) passed. This ends the practice of using those same hands in Regional events so that all the players at the NABC may compare their results to the "big guys". The request from the motion came from

those "big guys" who have found a serious cheating exposure by those hands being discussed widely. I voted against in a 14-11 vote.

Motions to provide subsidies to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place NAP teams and to allow participation of extra B and C teams in the GNT for those Districts with a minimum of 8 team participation in the District final failed in very close votes.

A motion to provide live streaming of both BOD and BOG meetings failed as far too costly. Other ways to make them accessible are being explored.

The experiment currently being conducted of permitting "drop-ins" will not allow drop-ins from team events to premier pair events.

### A REAL STEP FORWARD FOR BRIDGE EDUCATION

As many of you know, the ACBL formed a separate foundation many years ago, to foster bridge education. The ACBL Educational Foundation was formed as a 501(c)(3) membership organization (permitting contributions to be tax-deductible) with

the ACBL BOD as its members. 3 out of 9 trustees were required to be BOD members and others were elected from the ACBL at large. I served as a trustee for 6 years. It was only able to operate on a small volunteer scale, making small grants, collecting most of its funds from ACBL fundraisers. At this meeting, the BOD voted to change the EF's bylaws to permit it to be independent of the BOD, seeking a skilled Board and professional staff; to raise serious funds; and to truly tackle big bridge education issues. We hope that once the remade EF gets going it will be able to handle all the education areas currently handled by the ACBL as well as provide major funding to bridge projects.



