

CEO REPORT

To: ACBL Board of Directors
ACBL Board of Governors

cc: Michael Kovacich
Peter Rank

From: Jay Baum, CEO
ACBL

Date: October 2010

1. **MEMBERSHIP:**

Membership through the first ten months of 2010 has remained flat. We had two very big months from 2009 (November and December) which we do not expect to match in terms of new members but hope our retention will allow ACBL to show a small gain in 2010. New members benefited from the change in LM requirements and the great effort by our teachers and clubs.

2010 new members should end +11,000, which has been our average for many years.

<http://web2.acbl.org/bb/BOD/10OctoberMembership.pdf>

2. **CLUB AND MEMBER SERVICES:**

The Club and Member Services Department has been concentrating on cross training on each of the job responsibilities. This has gone smoothly and will prove to be beneficial in the months to come.

A notice has been placed at the top of our web site home page to encourage members to opt-in to receive their membership renewal notices via email instead of hard copy. Membership surveys indicate they want to be notified in this manner however, they have failed to sign up. A notice will be included in the December issue of the Bulletin this year and continue in 2011.

Club game table counts remain steady year to date. The increase continues to grow for online games. Through September 2010, online table count is 529,327. The 2009 online count was 589,520.

A club alerted us that we might have had an error in our club table totals. After reviewing our programs, we discovered that if a club held more than one game in any "session",

(i.e. morning, afternoon, evening) that the program would not pick up the second games. While this had a minimal or no affect on most clubs, it did skew results for some. The glitch was fixed and 2009 and 2010 results have been corrected. This had no financial implications.

3. **TOURNAMENT DIVISION:**

Regional tables continue on a strong pace for the year with a 1,490-table average per tournament. With two additional regionals this year, expect to easily exceed 2009 totals.

Sectional tables remain flat with 2009 but average tables per tournament trail 2009. We will see a dip for 2010 as the number of sectionals being held in the last two months will be 16 less than last year.

STaCs continue to grow. With a hefty average of 1,677 per tournament, they remain very popular with our members. Total 2010 STaC tables will set a new record for us, as will the average tables per event.

Overall 2010 total tables will finish with good, solid numbers and give us some challenging numbers to reach in 2011.

http://web2.acbl.org/bb/BOD/2009_2010tc.pdf

4. **BULLETIN:**

We have reinstated the mailing of the ACBL Bridge Bulletin to members who live outside North America that wish to pay for the mailing cost of \$66 per year plus their membership dues.

5. **MARKETING PROGRAMS/INITIATIVES:**

Radio Ads for Clubs & Teachers – targeting “baby boomers” and “empty nesters”

These radio ads were made available to clubs and teachers in June of this year. To date, a total of ten requests have been made to use the ads for marketing purposes. We expect requests to increase as clubs and teachers become more aware of the availability of these ads and that they qualify for reimbursement under the Cooperative Advertisement Program guidelines.

Learn to Play Bridge Member Drive Promotion

This automated new member campaign was launched in June of this year and since that time a total of 103 individuals have responded to the promotional offer and joined the ACBL.

LA Times Special Report Targeting 50+ Promotional Ad

Marketing placed an ad which appeared in a special report in the July 29, 2010 issue of the Los Angeles Times newspaper. This special report targeted the 50+ audience and reached 1.5 million readers. Marketing mailed copies of the special report to all Board members after the publication printed.

AARP 2010 Exhibit

Marketing exhibited at the 2010 AARP Convention in Orlando, FL, from September 30 – October 2, 2010. There were a total of 23,500 attendees at this convention, and the ACBL booth received an almost steady volume of traffic by attendees interested in the game of bridge. A total of 855 Learn to Play Bridge cd's and a total of 1,932 decks of cards were distributed at the booth. Additionally, Marketing received 490 prospective lead generations via the random drawing for a bridge cruise. It is estimated that the ACBL booth received about an 8% to 10% rate of traffic volume – an excellent rate given that there were 417 other exhibitors competing for the attendees' time.

- What The Stuff – AARP – Baby Boomers Segment on Hallmark Channel
 - The ACBL was interviewed for a segment to be included on the WTS Baby Boomers TV program which airs on the Hallmark Channel on Nov 10, 2010 (with reruns being aired on the Hallmark Movie Channel on Nov 11, Nov 15 and Nov 16). Additionally, the segment is available for viewing on the WTS Baby Boomers website at:
http://www.whatthestufftv.com/BabyBoomers/baby_boomers_our_show.htm. Additionally, the segment will be posted on the ACBL website and Marketing will be provided a copy of the segment on a DVD so it can be used for promotional purposes.

Cooperative Advertising Program

The Cooperative Advertising program continues to be a successful and popular resource for clubs and teachers in their efforts to reach out to beginner and/or newcomer players. This years program, has subsidized advertising costs for 288 beginner/newcomer ad campaigns submitted by clubs and teachers as of November, 2010.

Tournament Marketing Ads

As of November, Marketing has distributed a total of 417 tournament advertisement email blasts to members on behalf of tournament sponsors for 2010.

Youth Initiatives

School Bridge Classes

A total of 193 classes were conducted during Spring/Summer of 2010. Currently, there are 124 classes registered for Fall/Winter – making a total of 317 classes conducted in 2010.

Youth NABC

A total of 113 players attended the 2010 Youth NABC held in New Orleans this past July. A total of 124.75 tables of bridge were played. Each participant received a “goodie bag”, a souvenir t-shirt and hat. Box lunches, snacks and drinks were provided for the attendees each day of the three day event. Entertainment was provided each day – including a visit from award winning author, Louis Sachar (author of best-selling book Holes) who signed copies of his latest book, The Cardturner. Astronaut Greg Johnson also attended.

Beginner and advanced bridge lessons were provided for the parents on Friday and Saturday mornings. A winner’s reception and buffet was held the final evening of the event.

6. **TECHNOLOGY:**

We are in the process of redesigning the ACBL homepage with additional redesign to follow. We specifically are aiming for easier navigation for our members in addition to a fresh look. Kitty Cooper has agreed to spearhead this project.

The reporting of club results with hand records and travelers is up and running and have been very popular.

The initial stage of ACBLscore replacement is moving very fast. We hope to have that finished by the end of February. Our systems consultant, Steve Bailey, is doing a great job on this.

Technology Committee will give a full report with other details.