

CEO REPORT

To: ACBL Board of Directors

cc: Michael Kovacich
Peter Rank

From: Robert Hartman, CEO
ACBL

Date: November 2011

MEMBERSHIP:

Membership has been remarkably steady in 2011. The year began with 165,039 members and through October 31, 2011 total membership stands at 165,332 members. New members continue to be strong with 9,894 people joining the ACBL during the first ten months of the year.

[http://web2.acbl.org/bb/BOD/Active Membership Statistics.pdf](http://web2.acbl.org/bb/BOD/Active%20Membership%20Statistics.pdf)

BRIDGE ADMINISTRATION:

Through the end of October, the total table count at Regionals and Sectionals are both down 1% as compared to the corresponding 2010 figures. The decrease in table count can be attributed to two fewer Regionals and 13 fewer Sectionals being held in 2011. On a positive note, average table count has increased slightly for both Regionals (1477.5 vs. 1472) and Sectionals (169.7 vs. 168.9).

STaCs have shown a solid 6% increase over 2010 with an identical number of STaCs offered in both years. There were 4,298 more STaC tables in play through October 31 of this year as compared to the same period in 2010.

Ten Cruise Sectionals have been offered this year as compared with 5 last year. However, total overall table count is “only” up 42.5%.

http://web2.acbl.org/bb/BOD/2010_2011tc.pdf

OFFICIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BRIDGE:

The 7th edition of the Official Encyclopedia of Bridge was delivered to the printer in pdf format in late September. The locally produced CDs for the front (tournament results, more than 3600 biographies, Bridge Hall of Fame bios) and the back (the entire printed

contents) were delivered to the printer about two weeks later. We received word on Oct. 31 that Jim Maier at Baron Barclay Bridge Supply had received the shipment from the printer, McNaughton & Gunn in Saline MI. We received our copies from Baron Barclay, on Thursday November 3rd and we have sent one to Larry Cohen for him to review, most likely in the January issue of the Bridge Bulletin.

FINANCE ADMINISTRATION:

Hired a new Human Resources Manager who will also serve as the plan administrator for all benefit plans. She plans to leverage ACBL's benefit providers to continue building efficiencies in the department.

Filed ACBL 990 return for Tax exempt entities. It will be posted & available for viewing at Guidestar.com by the end of Nov.

Completed the audits of the 401(k) and Pension Plan.

Filed the 5500 returns for the 401(k), Pension Plan, and Retiree Medical Plan.
Reorganized the Accounting Dept to operate more effectively. Eliminated two positions while maintaining adequate separation of duties and continuing to meet the 5 day month end close deadline.

Completed 2012 budget and 2011 Forecast preparation on time to meet timeline established.

Completed filing the dissolution documents for Bridge Ventures, Inc.

Completed the repairs to the IT Server room ceiling to meet the Fire Marshall inspection requirements with limited interruption to telephone and email service.

Received notification from the trustee of the J. Robert Stillinger Trust stating that ACBL is named as a beneficiary to receive \$10,000 in memory of Life Master Lois L. Stillinger. Timing of distribution will not be disclosed until sometime after December 23, 2011 to allow for any contests to the Trust provisions .

MARKETING/EDUCATION:

Tradeshaw/Exhibits

2011 AARP Expo

ACBL exhibited at the 2011 AARP Expo in Los Angeles, CA September 22-24, 2011. Approximately 17,650 individuals attended this three day event. Traffic to the ACBL's booth is estimated to have been between 800 and 900 visitors during the course of the event. (4% - 5%) This exhibit allowed Marketing an opportunity to reach and create awareness of the game of bridge to a highly targeted audience of baby boomers/retirees.

Visitors to the booth were provided a free “Learn to Play Bridge” cd, the ACBL brochure, a listing of local bridge teachers/clubs, a sample of the Bulletin magazine and other marketing materials to help engage them into our game. A test promotional campaign was launched at the booth - offering a \$10 “Bridge Lesson Rebate” coupon to drive attendees to bridge teachers to take bridge lessons. The rebate coupons will also serve as a tracking mechanism allowing Marketing an opportunity to measure the effectiveness the campaign.

The Marketing Dept was assisted at the booth each day by local bridge volunteers – including District 23 Board Member Rand Pinsky.

An interesting note – one visitor to the booth stated that she had visited the ACBL’s booth at the AARP Expo in Las Vegas (two years ago) and had been given a “Learn to Play Bridge” cd which prompted her and three of her friends to take bridge lessons. She stated that they are all four now ACBL members.

NCTM (National Conference of Teachers of Math) Regional Exhibit

ACBL exhibited at this expo in St. Louis, MO October 26 – 28, 2011. Approximately 3,700 math educators attended this two day event. Traffic to ACBL’s booth is estimated to have been between 500-600 visitors. (14% - 16%) This exhibit allowed Marketing an opportunity to promote and create awareness to educators of the many benefits that the game of bridge offers to students. It also allowed us the opportunity to promote the ACBL’s “School Bridge Lesson Series” program.

Kathy Rolfe, local school bridge teacher, presented a workshop at this event on behalf of the ACBL, entitled, “Creative Curriculum: Teaching Math Concepts Using Duplicate Bridge”. Approximately 25 teachers attended this workshop.

Only week after the event, a school teacher in the St. Louis area contacted us and has requested to participate in the School Bridge Lesson program.

Promotions

Learn to Play Bridge Member Drive Promotion

This automated new member campaign was launched in June of 2010 and since that time a total of 413 individuals have responded to the promotional offer and joined the ACBL. As of this date, this promotion averages a response of approximately 20 new member sign ups per month.

Media/PR

Since the 2011 Summer Board meeting, a total of 83 press releases have been distributed covering the following subject matter:

- ❖ *NASA Astronaut Shares Experiences With Youth Bridge Players*
- ❖ *Baum Retires After Ten Years as CEO*
- ❖ *The American Contract Bridge League Announces New CEO*

❖ *ACBL Partners With Local Educators to Bridge the Achievement Gap*

Toronto NABC releases sent to the hometown newspapers of the following event winners:

- ❖ Aileen Osofsky Swiss Teams
- ❖ Baron Barclay National Youth Open Pairs
- ❖ Collegiate Team Championships
- ❖ Freeman Mixed BAM Teams
- ❖ Grand National Teams
- ❖ NABC+ Fast Open Pairs
- ❖ Roth Open Swiss Teams
- ❖ Springold Knockout Teams
- ❖ Truscott USPC Senior Swiss Teams
- ❖ Wager Women's Knockout Teams
- ❖ Wernher Open Pairs
- ❖ von Zedtwitz LM Pairs

ACBL President Visits 100 Clubs in 100 Days

- 74 releases were sent out announcing the second leg of the tour to the proper media outlets

Advertising

Video Ads

Development of a 30 second TV ad targeting the “recently retired/empty-nester” audience has been finalized. We are currently completing the media distribution process so that the ad may be used by clubs/teachers to support their local marketing efforts. This ad will be also be used for any ACBL multi-media press releases and/or online digital video ad placement that targets the baby boomer audience.

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. The program, year-to-date, has subsidized advertising costs for 278 beginner/newcomer ad campaigns submitted by clubs and teachers at a total cost of \$124,571.60.

Tournament Marketing Ads

Marketing has distributed a total of 394 tournament advertisement email blasts to members on behalf of tournament sponsors – year to date – as of September 30, 2011

Web, Social & Mobile Media

The ACBL continues to take advantage of marketing opportunities offered via the website and social and mobile media platforms.

WEB MEDIA

ACBL.org Website

Kitty Cooper's team has completed the redesign of the ACBLscore and Club sections of the website and are working on redesigning the remainder of the site. We will be conducting internal testing of all of the redesigned pages prior to making them live on our web server.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook – 2,330 “fans”

Twitter – 685 followers

LinkedIn – 146 members

Marketing is taking steps to take advantage of social media sites in order to increase awareness and participation of our NABCs. A Facebook “event” page for the Seattle NABC has been created and a “viral” campaign launched to promote this event. Marketing plans to make this a standard practice prior to each NABC.

MOBILE MEDIA

ACBL Smart Phone App – “Find a Club”

The ACBL smart phone app – “ACBL Mobile” - “Find a Club” feature - is now available for Android smart phones as well as the iPhone platform. The “Find a Teacher” feature of this app is expected to launch on the iPhone platform mid-November. To date, a total of 3,171 individuals have downloaded the iPhone application. There have been 455 downloads of the Android app, only two days after it was announced.

School Bridge Classes

To date, a total of 296 classes have been conducted during 2011 with a total of 1,411 graduates.

Youth NABC

A total of 155 young players attended the 2011 Youth NABC in Toronto, ON.

School Bridge Club “Pilot” Program

This “pilot” workshop targeting Memphis area school teachers was conducted on September 17, 2011. Marketing enlisted the help of Patty Tucker and Carol Mathews to conduct this one day workshop where the teachers were taught how to play bridge and introduced to the various school bridge text materials and resources available to them through the ACBL's School Bridge Lesson Series program.

20 school teachers attended this workshop - representing 3 different states: Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama. Fifteen teachers signed up to participate in the School Bridge Lesson Series program – with a total of 17 classes registered among 12 different schools. A total of 332 students are participating in the School Bridge Lesson Series program as a result of this workshop.

Two of the participating schools have bridge instruction as part of the school day (one a Memphis high school and the other a Memphis Montessori school) – the remainder of the classes are being offered as after school programs.

Teacher Recruitment Efforts

2011 Accredited Teacher Stats

TAP Accredited	4,536
TAP Accredited since the TAP was updated	1,052
Accredited through Better Bridge	834
Accredited through Easybridge!	982
Registered Teachers	244
School Bridge Teachers	633
ABTA Teachers	579
ABTA Master Teachers	97

Marketing is taking steps to create more awareness of ACBL's Teacher Accreditation Program. A logo has been created for the program and beginning in Seattle a "tote" bag with the logo will be provided to all those who participate in the TAP course. Plans are underway to more aggressively promote this program in order to grow our base of bridge teachers.

Communications/Publications

Marketing Matters e-Newsletter

The Marketing Matters E-Newsletter, (a quarterly publication distributed to clubs/teachers for purposes of bringing them marketing information to help them market themselves), received a complete makeover for Fall 2011. Not only was the layout and design of the newsletter updated to match the new Marketing brochure released Summer 2011, but the content of the newsletter was upgraded to bring more relevant and useful marketing information to clubs and teachers.

ACBL Marketing Brochure

The new marketing brochure has generated an overwhelming number of requests from clubs and teachers who are using it to help promote ACBL and the game of bridge.