

Attachment C

Dear Fellow Board Members,

This is not the way I pictured to say goodbye.

Ever since having arrived to North-America 55 years ago I have lived my life by set plans and goals, as these luxuries were not available under the restrictive communist regime, where even those who were sentenced to death had to make a "confession" prior to their voluntary suicide. This curve ball that Mother Nature recently threw at our family disrupted my plans, and accordingly instead of talking to you, please accept this message.

My father was close to 50 years old, when the Communists came to power in Hungary and confiscated his small shoe store He was left with nothing that may support his family. At that age he took a minimum wage job, and started to study at night to earn a college degree. My aim in life became: If I could be just half as good, as my father was, I'll be a happy man. My motto became (closely resembling that of the French revolution): Friendship, Freedom and Love.

Looking back it was obvious that I could not do it alone. Whether we admit it or not, we all have some guiding light in our lives. Mine is Mari. She is one of the estimated less than one hundred babies, who survived the Nazi concentration camps. Her life and survival was subject to a documentary movie. She has become a successful businesswoman, highly accomplished bridge player, loving wife, proud mother and grandmother, who tolerated me spending countless hours with bridge administration, away from the family. Thank you, thank you, thank you Mari! It is a sad twist of fate, that her sudden illness prevented us from being with you today.

After surviving the Nazi and communist persecutions and the inglorious defeat of the Hungarian revolution I moved to Canada, where our family enjoys a free and prosperous life. At the university I was drawn to the game of bridge, actually to meet girls and find companionship. Instead I fell in love with the complexity of the game. Representing Eastern Canada on the BOD, if I was useful in any way to our community, then I feel gratified. Serving as Treasurer, then President of the ACBL, and Treasurer, Honorary-Secretary then Vice-President of the WBF, I feel more than recognized. Possibly the greatest acknowledgement I have received is having been named for life to the "Committee of Honour of the WBF", that is limited to eleven living persons. All these I could not have achieved without the trust and support of the ACBL Board of Directors.

I would like to pay tribute to some of the great Board-Members that I had the pleasure to serve with. (I'll not mention any friends who are presently on the Board, you all know who you are). It was a privilege and honour to work together with Sol Seidman, Syd Levy, Jim Zimmerman, Bernard (The Judge) Warshauer, Herb Smith, Bobby Wolff, Glenn Smith, Harriette Buckman, Dick Anderson, Jerry Fleming ---- whom I all consider giants of bridge administration. I would be remiss not to mention the name of the greatest CEO (prior to Robert's arrival) that I had worked with: Dick Goldberg, and Henry Francis, who has established our Bulletin to a world class recognition together with Brent Manley. Furthermore I thank our Head office staff, very specially Kelley McGuire, whose work and support has been unfailing. I have spent more than half of my life in

bridge administration. It was a long road, where I had my share of ups and downs. Looking back 33 years, together we have achieved a lot for our membership: The ACBL is better organized; it is on sound financial basis; we have secured smoke-free environment to our players (even though when I first suggested this, the rejection to my proposal was overwhelming); provided meaningful insurance protection to our units, districts and volunteers; established friendlier cooperation with other bridge federations; became part of the Olympic movement, etc. I am also proud to have assisted in establishing the ACBL Audit Committee, and wish to emphasize how important is the independence and transparent reporting of this vital safeguarding committee.

What is ahead of us? We have to pay serious attention when Al Levy talks to us of internet bridge. We need to make more efforts to connect with youngsters and draw them to our game. The ACBL is in unique position to provide leadership in the bridge world due to our dedicated teachers, great available teaching materials, outstanding experts and excellent tournament directors. I trust that this opportunity will not be missed.

The ACBL has made my life more meaningful, and I hope that I have made some substantial contributions to our bridge community. I am confident, that my successor, Leo Weniger will continue to serve our organization with at least as much enthusiasm as I have done for better bridge.

George Retek
Board of Director