

## MANAGEMENT REPORT

To: ACBL Board of Directors

cc: Richard Anderson  
Peter Rank

From: Robert Hartman, CEO  
ACBL

Date: July 2016

## MEMBERSHIP

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We are pleased to report the membership total continues to rise. After the first six months, we stand at 168,742. This reflects an increase of 986 from this time last year. These positive numbers, well worth celebrating, have come about through the collective energies of all of our employees, volunteers, club managers, teachers and directors. Full membership statistics can be found at:

[Active Membership Statistics062016.pdf](#)

## CLUB & MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

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### **Club Tables:**

Face-to-face club table count is up 1.23% as compared to May 2015. Total table count through May 2016 is 1,357,569 of which 437,296 are from online games. The full report can be found at:

[Club Tbls Report 06-29-16.pdf](#)

### **World Wide Pairs:**

This year all files and materials for the World Wide Pairs were provided to clubs electronically. 217 clubs registered for the World Wide Pairs. This did not have a negative impact in the number of participating clubs as last year 203 clubs participated.

### **Team Viewer:**

The Club and Member Services employees have been able to provide additional technical support to our members and clubs with the help of Team Viewer. This software allows us to have remote control of the member's computer. Two employees have been testing the program on a trial basis. The remaining staff is being trained and will begin using Team Viewer this month.

### **Rank Change Cards:**

The monthly printing and mailing of rank advancement cards has been discontinued as of July 2016. Members are still notified of rank advancement in several ways:

- Notifications are printed on the back page of the member's Bridge Bulletin
- Congratulatory emails are sent
- A printable card is available on the Member MyACBL page of our website
- A printable certificate for all ranks below Life Master is on the member MyACBL page.

## **TOURNAMENT DIVISION**

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### **2016 Tournaments**

Average Regional table count per tournament was down 1.9% (1385.6 v.1411.9).

Five fewer Regionals were held to date as compared to last year. This has resulted in total table count being down 9.2%.

Average Sectional table count was down 1% (159.8 v. 161.5).

Four fewer Sectionals were held to date as compared to last year. This has resulted in total table count being down 1.9%.

Average STaC table count is down 1% (1338.6 v. 1352).

Two additional STaC were held to date as compared to last year. This has resulted in total table count increasing by 4%.

Total tournament tables decreased by 3.5% (8,065 tables) with seven fewer tournaments being held. [2016TC02.pdf](#)

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

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### **Personnel**

- Jim Lopushinsky has retired. David White is the now the sole ACBLscore developer

### **Software Development**

- ACBLscore 8.15 was released to fix known bugs in the monthly financial process. Our goal is not to release any future versions of ACBLscore and focus our efforts on future scoring software.
- ACBL Live 2.6 was released to provide the following new capabilities:
  - Messaging is now automatic and not driven by Tournament Directors. Our servers check to see if a message has been sent, and if not, the server sends it. If there is a scoring change, the program now only sends message updates to people affected by the change.

- Dates, Times and Event Names are now taken from TourneyTRAX and standardized.
- Events that are not played can be flagged.
- A new view has been created that we are calling “Details” which is a one page view of many different statistics. This has been a long requested capability.
- Migrated database from the AS/400 to a redundant SQL server in the AWS cloud. This removes reliance upon network connectivity to Horn Lake.
- Upgraded TourneyTRAX to version 3.0
- Rolled out online rank cards where members can now print their own rank cards directly from MYACBL.

### **Infrastructure**

- Rolled out Microsoft Office 365 to employees and Board of Directors which included migrating email from a standalone server in Horn Lake to a redundant service in the cloud. This removes reliance upon network connectivity to Horn Lake. The plan is to move all employees to an acbl.org email for their business communications.
- Purchased and configured new laptops for all full-time tournament directors. These systems are being rollout out at the Summer NABC in Washington.
- Upgraded active directory infrastructure to Microsoft Windows 2012 and retired two Microsoft windows 2003 domain controllers.
- Migrated all users from an outdated and unsupported VPN to a redundant Meraki VPN.

### **Infrastructure and Operations**

- The ACBL started using the Amazon Web Service (AWS) cloud for development and production applications. Currently ACBL Live is hosted on a server in the AWS cloud and the messaging engine which sends ACBL Live notifications to members is also hosted in the AWS cloud. We are still in the process of determining what systems will be in the cloud and what system will be operated out of Horn Lake.
- The ACBL engaged Protech, a systems integration firm headquartered in Memphis, to evaluate the network and server infrastructure in the ACBL data center. We received recommendations on upgrading our network core and firewall infrastructure. Based on those recommendations we have purchased Cisco Firewalls and Cisco Layer 3 switches for our Data Center and hope to have those in place by the end of the year.
- The infrastructure and development teams began to use tools from Atlassian to track bugs, help desk requests, and work requests. These tools help the team focus on the issues at hand and provide us with the ability to see recurring issues.

## **Finance**

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Through May 31<sup>st</sup>, the change in Net Assets from Operations is a gain of \$162,342, \$217,015 more than the budgeted \$54,672 loss, and \$154,454 better than last year’s \$7,888 gain for the same period. Total revenue, through May, was \$110,156 lower than budget due primarily to fewer tournaments being held and smaller than average tournament size. We expect more

tournaments to be held in the second half of the year, which should bolster sanction and session income. The revenue shortfall has been more than offset by the \$327,171 lower than expected operating and general & administrative expenses. In addition, the ACBL has signed a four-year agreement with BBO, which will increase revenue by \$500,000 annually or \$2,000,000 over the contract term. In 2016, the ACBL will realize \$250,000 in additional revenue for the final six months of the year.

The June financial results will be finalized and shared with the Finance Committee ahead of the summer board meeting. Management is also presenting a new financial reporting format to the board which offers a greater level of detail and analysis. The year-to-date June financial results, along with the new reporting format, will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and shared with the full board.

The League's general liability and directors and officers insurance policies were renewed as of May 1<sup>st</sup>; there was no increase in premium.

The ACBL Charity Foundation's and the ACBL Educational Foundation's 2015 IRS Forms 900 have been completed and filed. ACBL's 2015 IRS Form 990 will be completed and filed ahead of the August 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

## Human Resources

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### **Current staffing**

220 employees

Headquarters: 58 full time; 3 part time

Field: Canada – 3 full time; 23 part time    US – 35 full time; 98 part time

Thanks to the hard work of the members of the in-house counsel interview committee, Linda Dunn has been hired as our new counsel. Byron Jennings joined ACBL in April as our Senior Accountant. Byron has over 15 years of experience in general ledger accounting, month and quarter end close, audit, and financial reporting. We've hired two part-time local tournament directors since May 1: Darleen Bates, reporting to Geoff Greene and Chris Wiegand, reporting to Matt Koltnow.

Three employees have retired since May 1: Jim Lopushinsky, Sue Doe and David Marshall. The Director of Field Operations position is still open.

### **Job descriptions review**

We are reviewing all job descriptions with the assistance of department heads and employees. This review will bring our job descriptions up to date. It will also prepare us for any potential changes required by the new Department of Labor guidelines which go into effect December 1.

### **Employment policies review/revisions**

We have begun a review of all employment policies. Our goal is to have an updated employee handbook ready for distribution by end of Q1 2017.

On a related topic, all employees will be required to sign off on the receipt and understanding of our Youth Protection & Abuse Policy, as well as complete an online training on anti-harassment. This will be completed by end of Q4 2016.

## **Meeting Services**

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Washington DC reservations are going very well. The first weekend in DC will be exciting for the players! There is a fabulous band for the Opening Reception on Friday evening and the Capital Steps on Saturday evening. The Capital Steps are always great and with this being an election year they will have plenty of material.

Reservations for Orlando opened last month. They are selling and will pick up after the Summer NABC.

The alert and stop cards in all bid boxes have been replaced with the larger size. This was done based on feedback from the Reno NABC survey.

Thanks to local NABC volunteers, sponsorships seem to be picking up. Washington DC has Krauss Investments while Orlando has Tupperware and Florida's Naturals. Kansas City is pursuing leads and Toronto is getting started with some excellent leads as well.

## **Marketing**

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### **Acquisition/Awareness**

#### ***Dashboard analytics***

With a focus on prospect data and ultimately increasing membership to the ACBL, McNeely Pigott & Fox has set up a Google Analytics dashboard to better understand traffic on the ACBL website. This allows us to draw conclusions about user behavior so that we can plan our marketing efforts accordingly. Data shows that the website does receive a significant amount of prospective member traffic, but we need a stronger emphasis on conversation of these prospects into members throughout the organization.

Below are some of the initial findings with a month's worth of data, collected during May 2016. The dashboard continues to collect information and findings/recommendations are constantly evolving.

- Baby boomers are the largest demographic of users of our website.
- Prospective members aren't engaging with the educational resources currently available to them on the website.
- Due to a variety of factors (i.e. multiple device usage, members visiting the site but not logging in, etc.), it is difficult to completely isolate prospective member traffic from returning members. Recommendations are being made to fine-tune this data to better analyze prospective member traffic vs. current member traffic.

Marketing is currently determining next steps based on the data collected. These include, but are not limited to: modifying the website so it is more non-member friendly, developing a digital profile of our prospective members, and developing digital campaigns to drive prospective member traffic to the education/game sections of the website.

### ***Just Play Bridge***

On June 1, the ability to play solitaire games from Bridge Base Online was added to the ACBL website. The goal of this project is to collect email addresses and information from prospective members visiting the website. To play, users must first fill out a brief form including some contact information. During the first month of availability (and with limited promotions outside of a homepage slider) 420 players registered to use the product. Of these, just over 25% self-identified as non-members.

Non-members are added to the prospective member database, and engagement (an auto-opt in to weekly It's Your Call emails) is begun within a week of collecting their data. As of June 28, three of these prospects have become ACBL members.

We are working with BBO on a MiniBridge-style solitaire game to be added to the website, ideally, in Fall 2016. The goal is to increase prospective member traffic, engage with them and convert them into ACBL members.

### ***It's Your Call***

On May 24, Marketing launched a new weekly subscription email using archived It's Your Call columns. It's Your Call was chosen because it is the most popular post on Facebook each week. The email gives subscribers a weekly bridge problem along with a link to read the complete expert answer on our website.

While all members and non-members alike have the opportunity to subscribe to the email, a few select groups from the prospective member database were automatically subscribed (emails collected through Learn Bridge in A Day? and former members who have lapsed for more than six months). The inclusion of lapsed members encouraged 24 renewals.

Thus far, 300 users have self-subscribed to the email, largely driven from the ACBL's Facebook post letting followers know they can receive the It's Your Call email. Of this group, 28% are not

known members. Data is currently being cross-referenced and non-members will be added to the prospective member database. This is an ongoing process.

Further promotions and initiatives are being planned to drive self-subscribers to It's Your Call with a goal of attracting social players/non-members.

### ***Bridge Life***

In April 2016, Bridge Life resumed regular mailings to known non-members playing at clubs. The marketing piece is mailed monthly, and each non-member should only receive the publication once. To date, 4702 non-members have received the mailing, and 49 of these have since become members.

The publication is currently being refreshed. Changes include a new cover, updated articles with a renewed focus on true beginner content and a new and improved membership mailer card, making it easier than ever to join.

### ***Resource Center/Tricks of the Trade***

Designed to be a convenient, easy-to-use tool that allows bridge clubs, teachers, units and districts to order or download virtually anything they need to grow the game, the Resource Center has become a regular part of marketing operating procedures. Average site visits and resource downloads continue to rise as more clubs, teachers and unit/district officials become aware of the Resource Center and others continue to return.

Tricks of the Trade, the marketing blog released in conjunction with the Resource Center, continues to receive positive feedback and encourage traffic and downloads. On average, the email blast for the blog has a very strong 38% open rate.

## **RETENTION**

### ***New member email series***

A series of monthly emails has been created to guide new members on the first year of their membership. New members are encouraged to establish their MyACBL and Abenity accounts, access education resources, and visit clubs/tournaments. Each month there is a new education lesson that links to practice hands in Learn To Play Bridge, and a one-question survey aimed at helping Marketing better understand the first-year member and his or her needs.

All emails have a 50% or greater open rate. The average click-through-rate to the ACBL website or LTPB is 23%, with some emails receiving up to a 35% click-through-rate. This has been a resounding success.

### ***E-renewal notices***

Clubs and Member Services, Marketing, and IT are working on a project to begin emailing renewal notices to all members with known email addresses. This will save the organization significant funds in printing and postage. Additionally it provides the opportunity to clean our email lists and revamp the way we communicate with our members.

## **ENGAGEMENT**

### ***The Longest Day***

The Longest Day 2016 was held on June 20. This is a day earlier than previous years due to the leap year. In addition to The Longest Day, there was a Canadian-specific event held, called Trump Alzheimer's Contré. In total, 190 clubs in the U.S. and Canada officially registered to participate. Total club participation will not be known until club reports are turned in July 5.

As of June 29, \$301,708.19 has been donated online to The Longest Day, with checks and funds still being mailed. Trump Alzheimer's Contré has raised \$7,510 online. Based on feedback, total funds raised are expected to once again reach \$500,000+.

A survey of both participating clubs and members is in production and should be distributed during the month of July. Based on the feedback, we will determine the best way to proceed with our Alzheimer's Association partnership.

### ***Marketing Solutions, powered by Pianola***

All units and districts have been officially invited to use Marketing Solutions, powered by Pianola. Each unit/district will have access to a database of members it is appropriate for them to contact – their unit/district and surrounding regions. Thus far, 98 user accounts have been created, and 123 email campaigns have been initiated. In addition, the product is being used internally to fulfill Tournament Emails Services. To learn more about Pianola and to read the Terms of Service, visit <http://www.acbl.org/marketing/marketing-solutions/>.

Marketing plans to continue use and maximization of the service to units and districts through a series of email coaching communications.

### ***Rank and Recognition***

Several award certificates have been created and automated including those for Mini-McKenney, Ace of Clubs and rank changes below Life Master. These can be accessed through users' MyACBL accounts.

Emails with links to certificates recognizing members' rank changes are distributed at the beginning of each month. The program has been met with positive response from members and features one of the highest open rates of all ACBL email blasts.

### ***Social Media***

Facebook and Twitter are used to engage our members, promote the ACBL and reach out to the media in addition to including a digital marketing strategy in the majority of our communications and advertising plans. Our Facebook page is particularly active with 5,940 followers. This represents 15% growth over last year. Our Twitter account has 2,167 followers, a number that also continues to grow.

Facebook content is added daily and features a variety of topics including archived It's Your Call games (the most popular posts), winners, historic photographs, famous quotes and more. During NABCs, photo galleries of winners and players are added as well as links to Daily Bulletins.

Twitter is primarily used to reach out to media sources and connect members to articles written about the ACBL and bridge.

### ***Media Relations***

Media outreach during the Reno NABC generated 19 clips, of which three were broadcast, one radio (NPR) and the remaining were online/print. Post-event winner press releases generated two print placements. Total daily impressions for the clips were 186,070.

Pitches have already begun for the Summer NABC, with confirmation from Sports Illustrated Kids and strong interest from Washington Post Kids, both covering the YNABC.

## **OPERATIONS**

### ***E-marketing and communication***

Between January 1 and June 25, 2016, 424 email campaigns were launched by the ACBL. Email topics included the following: tournament announcements, Tricks of the Trade blog posts, rank change announcements, ACBL program promotions, district newsletters, surveys and reminders about expired memberships.

After the launch of Marketing Solutions, powered by Pianola, the number of campaigns led by the ACBL has already dropped by 26%. We expect this number to continue to drop as more units and districts are empowered to use the new tool.

### ***Hall of Fame***

To date, the Hall of Fame dinner has 108 confirmed reservations, with \$5,925 collected in ticket sales. A final push email will be sent July 1. A press release announcing Eddie Wold's induction is scheduled for release in his hometown market of Houston TX.

## **Education**

### ***Cooperative Advertising Program***

At the Reno NABC, the Board of Directors voted to reduce the reimbursement percentage from 75% to 50% and change the maximum reimbursement from \$750 per campaign to \$500, effective April 1, 2016.

Year-to-date, the program has reimbursed \$65,268.63 to 111 units, clubs and teachers.

### ***Learn Bridge in A Day?***

The ACBL hosts a LBIAD? seminar and corresponding teacher training course at each NABC. Reservations are now open for the LBIAD at the 2016 Summer NABC in Washington DC. The Educational Foundation also sponsors the course at the unit level, pending certain requirements are met. In 2015 they funded eleven events, with eight scheduled so far in 2016.

Marketing supports both the NABC and unit LBIAD events by distributing email blasts to area teachers, club managers, members and lapsed members before the event. For clubs hosting events, Marketing will also distribute email blasts upon request.

Participating clubs and units are requested to submit attendee contact information for follow-up marketing and ACBL membership tracking. So far 307 have attended LBIAD events sponsored by the Educational Foundation.

***Lifelong Learning***

In 2016, 272 students have participated in 13 classes at nine institutions offering bridge through their lifelong learning programs.

ACBL supported the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) program at University of South Florida, University of North Florida, University of Georgia, California State University at Long Beach and University of Delaware.

Other lifelong learning programs with ACBL-supported bridge lessons were offered at Collin College in Plano TX and McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

***Teacher Accreditation Program***

We have accredited 163 new teachers through five TAPs held in 2016. Below is the schedule for the balance of 2016.

Start Date	End Date	City	State	Type
July 21	July 23	Washington	DC	Summer NABC
Oct. 30	Nov. 1	Lancaster	PA	Lancaster Regional
Nov. 25	Nov. 27	Orlando	FL	Fall NABC

***Collegiate Bridge Bowl***

The 2015/2016 Collegiate Bridge Bowl finals are being played at the 2016 Summer NABC. The teams are University of Chicago, University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, Northwestern University and University of California, Berkeley.

***Youth NABC in Washington DC***

So far 111 youth have registered for the YNABC. Pre-registration is not required, but those who register by July 1 are guaranteed a T-shirt.

***Accredited Teachers***

The following are the statistics as of June 2016:

ACBL Accredited	6592
Better Bridge Accredited	952
ABTA Teacher	660
Easybridge! Accredited	1056
LBIAD Teachers	145

Note that teachers may be accredited under more than one program.

***School Bridge Program***

The following table shows statistics from the School Bridge Program:

<b>Schools</b>	S11	F11	S12	F12	S13	F13	S14	F14	S15	F15	<b>S16</b>
<b>College</b>	3	5	3	4	3	8	7	6	7	9	3
<b>High</b>	41	43	45	49	44	58	57	54	51	40	11
<b>Middle</b>	85	104	86	91	81	108	112	106	102	167	57
<b>Elementary</b>	45	51	58	60	62	75	78	68	72	89	14
<b>Total Classes</b>	377		396		439		488		537		85
<b>Total U.S. Teacher Stipends</b>	\$54,940		\$71,657		\$108,620		\$111,231		\$138,900		\$34,250
<b>Total Can. Teacher Stipends</b>	\$36,750		\$37,450		\$42,860		\$43,871		\$50,050		\$15,050
<b>Grand total for Stipends</b>	\$91,690		\$109,107		\$151,480		\$155,102		\$188,950		\$49,300

### ***Learn To Play Bridge***

The following are the statistics for registrations on the Learn To Play Bridge web application with conversions to memberships.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Total Registrations</b>	<b>ACBL Memberships</b>
Mar-14	872	1
Apr-14	130	1
May-14	76	3
Jun-14	120	1
Jul-14	56	1
Aug-14	2372	7
Sep-14	1221	15
Oct-14	601	19
Nov-14	433	13
Dec-14	408	12
Jan-15	572	7
Feb-15	179	11
Mar-15	2536	19
Apr-15	1369	23
May-15	729	28
Jun-15	4328	78
Jul-15	1948	38
Aug-15	1264	20
Sep-15	1281	29
Oct-15	1409	28
Nov-15	1055	21
Dec-15	856	9
Jan-16	1426	32
Feb-16	821	26
Mar-16	978	7
Apr-16	1182	11
May-16	902	11
Jun-16	1074	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,124</b>	<b>479</b>

### *Youth and Junior member statistics by district*

The following chart reflects paid members only. Previous Total is from the CEO Report of the 2016 Spring NABC.

<b>District</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Prev. Total</b>	<b>Diff.</b>	<b>Youths</b>	<b>Juniors</b>
1	33	23	10	23	10
2	46	43	3	34	12
3	59	56	3	49	10
4	22	20	2	6	16
5	10	10	0	7	3
6	79	62	17	62	17
7	177	152	25	145	32
8	20	18	2	13	7
9	80	70	10	64	16
10	36	37	-1	26	10
11	35	36	-1	28	7
12	14	15	-1	4	10
13	41	34	7	26	15
14	22	19	3	16	6
15	24	26	-2	17	7
16	79	78	1	50	29
17	27	21	6	13	14
18	4	3	1	1	3
19	31	25	6	21	10
20	13	16	-3	10	3
21	136	130	6	102	34
22	22	18	4	15	7
23	21	22	-1	9	12
24	61	48	13	40	21
25	49	55	-6	31	18
99	38	25	13	12	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>355</b>

2012 Summer NABC Management Report: 1240 total Junior/youth members

2013 Summer NABC Management Report: 1275 total Junior/youth members

2014 Summer NABC Management Report: 1208 total Junior/youth members

2015 Summer NABC Management Report: 1152 total Junior/youth members

2016 Summer NABC Management Report: 1179 total Junior/youth members

2012: 556 new Junior/youth members; 461 aged out

2013: 622 new Junior/youth members; 424 aged out

2014: 546 new Junior/youth members; 359 aged out

2015: 587 new Junior/youth members; 364 aged out