

ACBL MANAGEMENT REPORT

Spring 2023

Bridge Services

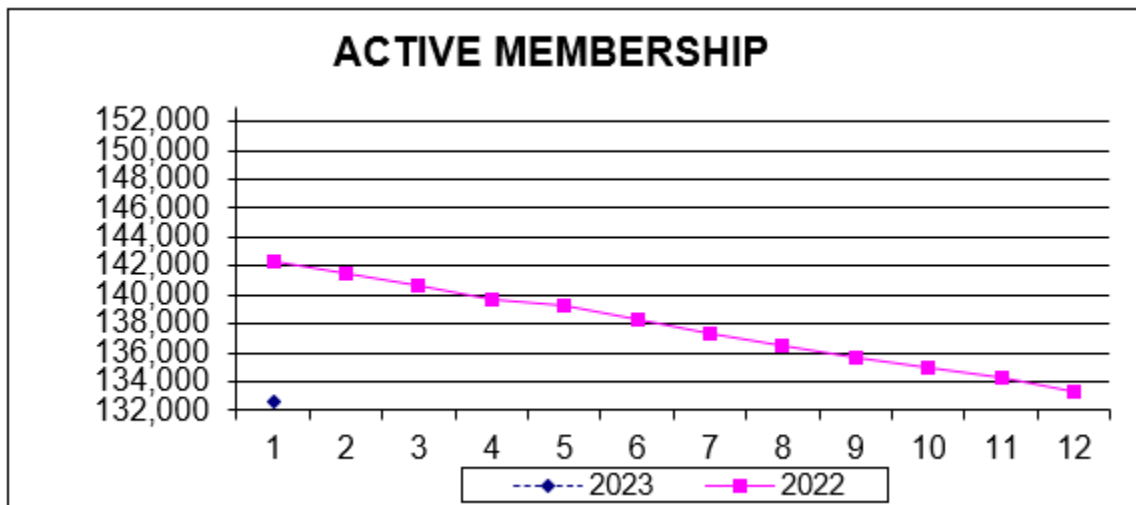
Club and Membership Services

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY

ACBL's membership count has continued to decline monthly and as of the end of January 2023, it is down to 132,699. This is 6.7% lower than one year ago. On a positive note, our new member recruitment is up 18.6% from 2022. Guest membership has increased tremendously in 2023.

Active Membership Statistics as of January 2023

Membership Category	2023	2022	Change	%
Life Masters	41,788	44,025	(2,237)	-5.1%
Non-Life Masters	86,991	94,051	(7,060)	-7.5%
Total Paying Members	128,779	138,076	(9,297)	-6.7%
Active Unpaid LM	3,890	4,190	(300)	-7.2%
Total Members	132,669	142,266	(9,597)	-6.7%



	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>%</u>
New Members YTD	562	474	88	18.6%
New Guest Members YTD	359	29	330	1137.9%

CLUB ACTIVITY

Virtual Club table count declined during the latter part of 2022, as no special events were run in Virtual Clubs after May 2022 (with the exception of The Longest Day weekend in June and NAP club-level qualifiers in June, July and August).

In January 2023, the Virtual Clubs were able to run a week of Junior Fund games, which awarded double masterpoints. This was the first special event in many months and was appreciated by the players, as shown in the increase in tables from the previous two months.

Year-over-year:

- Face-to-face table count increased
- Virtual table count decreased
- BBO table count decreased
- Clubs running face-to-face games increased
- Clubs running virtual games decreased
- Total ACBL clubs in operation increased

CLUB ACTIVITY	<u>November 2022</u>	<u>December 2022</u>	<u>January 2023</u>
Virtual Tables	31,472	29,989	34,883
ACBL	<i>59,141 in Nov. 2021</i>	<i>56,203 in Dec. 2021</i>	<i>87,539 in Jan. 2022</i>
F2F Tables	68,552	59,507	81,097
ACBL	<i>58,240 in Nov. 2021</i>	<i>46,737 in Dec. 2021</i>	<i>41,699 in Jan. 2022</i>
Total Tables	100,024	89,496	115,980
ACBL	<i>115,381 in Nov. 2021</i>	<i>102,940 in Dec. 2021</i>	<i>129,238 in Jan. 2022</i>
BBO Tables	187,683	195,393	197,720
	<i>205,080 in Nov. 2021</i>	<i>217,245 in Dec. 2021</i>	<i>243,769 in Jan. 2022</i>
Clubs running F2F games	1,589 Clubs	1,545 Clubs	1,563 Clubs
	<i>1,360 in Nov. 2021</i>	<i>1,348 in Nov. 2021</i>	<i>1,084 in Jan. 2022</i>
Clubs running Virtual games	331 Clubs	333 Clubs	336 Clubs
	<i>469 in Dec. 2021</i>	<i>467 in Dec. 2021</i>	<i>506 in Jan. 2022</i>
Total Clubs Operating	1,691 Clubs	1,646 Clubs	1,678 Clubs
	<i>1,592 in Nov. 2021</i>	<i>1,578 in Dec. 2021</i>	<i>1,423 in Jan. 2022</i>

Field Operations

We celebrate the accomplishments of our colleagues who have been promoted (see Human Resources section).

In January, the Tournaments Department was reorganized. We now have four area managers rather than seven. Our management staff and the areas they cover:

Scott Humphrey: Districts 7, 9, 10, 15, 16

Matt Koltnow: Districts 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, as well as the USA pieces of 18 and 19

Sol Weinstein: Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 24, 25, as well as the Canadian pieces of 18 and 19

Peter Wilke: Districts 8, 11, 12, 13, 14

Please feel free to reach out to any of them for questions or comments having to do with their respective Areas.

Meeting Services

Operations

Montie Hamblen has been promoted to Meeting Services Manager. She has teamed up with newly appointed Manager of NABC Operations Chris Wiegand. Together they plan to continue to finetune the NABC procedures while putting members first. Having previously worked together, they look forward to uniting their teams.

Spring NABC in New Orleans

HOUSING

Attrition at the Phoenix NABC resulted in paying the hotels more than \$115,000. We have projected a low pickup of rooms in New Orleans, which puts us in possible attrition. At the Sheraton, we will be able to work through the attrition amount with a rebook. The team and ConferenceDirect are working on the negotiations.

ConferenceDirect sent the rooming list to the hotels on February 17, and the New Orleans Marriott had reached 86.6% sold; Sheraton New Orleans was at 29.7% sold.

Unfortunately, confirmations were sometimes caught in Barracuda, even after the sender had been whitelisted. Meeting Services is working with IT and ConferenceDirect to correct this issue to make this as seamless as possible.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

We are omitting the vaccination approval program with VOW to reduce cost. Instead, we will have three verification stations to be manned by staff, volunteers and a temporary service company. The teams will review vaccination cards and give out wristbands. Players who

previously used VOW to verify will not need to present vaccination cards. Wristband checks will be done before the first two-session and single-session games.

As a return to previous practices, the team will use hotel security for medical issues instead of hiring an on-site medic.

PATRON LOUNGE

The Patron Lounge continues to grow interest in the Patron membership program. With the elimination of the printing and delivery of the Daily Bulletin to Patrons, the department will enhance the lounge refreshments to include a light lunch. Because some Patron members have requested to bring their spouse or bridge partner to the Patron Lounge, we will charge allow admittance with a \$10 cover for the cost of food.

2023 Summer NABC in Chicago

Reservations are moving slowly for Chicago. As of February 23, room pickup was at 3028, which is 23% of the room blocks. The breakdown shows that 2900 room nights have been sold versus the 11,197 contracted room nights at the Sheraton; at the Intercontinental, the breakdown is 128 room nights booked versus 1955 contracted room nights. The team has already started conversations to reduce costs. Intercontinental Chicago has agreed there will be no attrition costs; however, they will not allow us to cancel the block entirely.

2023 Fall NABC in Atlanta

Reservations for Patrons open on March 7 and for regular members on May 23. There will be no attrition costs. The team is reviewing the space and negotiating to give back rooms in order to facilitate the partnership with the Marriott. The team did the year-out visit the first week of February and has started laying out the space and office placement.

2024 Spring NABC in Louisville

Reservations for Patron members open September 12 and for regular members January 16, 2024. The team visited the Louisville site in February and met with the local committee, Louisville Tourism and the hotel to begin the planning. The city is excited to host us.

Human Resources

Staffing

HEADCOUNT

Headquarters: 48 full time

Field: 116 part time, 16 full time

OPEN POSITIONS

Executive Director
Director of Finance
Enterprise Architect
Project Manager

RETIREMENTS

Marilyn Wells, Associate National & Area Manager, retired 1/7/2023
Linda Aldridge, Club & Member Services Representative, retired 2/28/2023
Patsy Edwards, Club & Member Services Representative, retires 4/30/2023

PROMOTIONS

Montie Hamblen, Events Manager
Christina van Leeuwen, District 9 Tournament Director
Darleen Boone, District 9 Tournament Director
Andrew Echols, District 7 Tournament Director
Ted Ying, District 6 Tournament Director
Theresa Venhuis, District 17 Tournament Director
Jo Levy, District 21 Tournament Director
Joseph Grill, District 19 Associate Tournament Director
Carol Bond, District 7 Associate Tournament Director
Bjorgvin Kristinsson, District 17 Associate Tournament Director
Jennifer Kuhn, District 21 Associate Tournament Director

NEW HIRES

Ashley Balentine, Accounting Specialist
Erick Crowne, Developer
Felicia Holt, Club & Member Services Representative
Jade Hudson, Club & Member Services Representative
Alan Crank, NABC Caddy Master
Frederico Calderon, NABC Caddy
Jaime Reynolds, NABC Caddy

ADDITIONAL TRANSITIONS

Brian Russell, Associate National & Area Manager, has stepped down to part-time
Tournament Director, effective 1/1/2023.

Headquarters and Facilities

Renovation work in the southwest area of Headquarters is underway. Walls have been painted, and carpet has been installed. The cubicle rebuild and furniture placement are being scheduled. The kitchen renovation (new lower cabinets and countertops, placement of dishwasher, hot

water heater, sink) will soon be finalized. We expect to have employees back in their offices and cubicles by April 7.

Information Technology

Application Development Projects

MASTERPOINT® ENGINE V2

Version 2 was released in December 2022 with support for Rating 1 Face-to-Face games. The N/18 upgrade was released in February 2023. The next development phase will add functionality to support Virtual Club Games on BBO.

MASTERPOINT® ENGINE V1

Once the Virtual Club Games (BBO) functionality is implemented in V2, we can shut down Rule Engine V1. This will deprecate its code base so that it can be archived.

MYACBL

From December 1, 2022, to February 27, 2023, 80 tickets for the MyACBL project have been resolved. The team is continuing to migrate Web3/Web2 functionality and reporting to MyACBL.

ZEND/LIVE

The team has migrated all possible modules to MyACBL with the currently known exceptions to be ACBL Live (tournaments).

MYSQL DATABASE UPDATES

The MySQL databases have been upgraded from Version 5.6 to Version 5.7. We expect to upgrade to MySQL 8.0 by the end of 2023.

AS400 RETIREMENT

The project is being scoped to outline all existing RPG programs and implement them in modern technology (PHP, Python, NodeJS, etc.). Dues processing will be the first major focus of the project in order to create the necessary architecture and blueprint for all programs being migrated. We expect the retirement project to last one to two years.

AWS INFRASTRUCTURE

The team cleaned up unused AWS services (EC2, RDS, S3, etc.).

CHALLENGES

Not enough time currently goes into testing and QA, which leads to bugs/issues being discovered by ACBL members and staff. Additionally, the team's priorities are consistently changed daily. There has also been a slow development environment. The team has migrated MyACBL/Zend to use docker containers, which has greatly improved our speed to get new developers working on projects. However, there is still work to be done to improve efficiency. Finally, the ETL processes that synchronize data between multiple databases (AS400, TourneyTRAX, Entry Expressm BI, etc.) continues to be a weekly issue.

Resources

NEW HIRE

Erick Crowne has been hired as a software developer and will provide frontline support for MyACBL PHY Laravel website projects along with support tickets.

VENDOR PARTNERSHIPS UPDATES

Escolasoft partnership has expanded, assisting with the following projects: Masterpoint® Engine V2, MyACBL support and AS400 Retirement (step 1 – dues processing).

OPEN POSITIONS

Sr. Software Developer
Enterprise Architect
Project Manager

Infrastructure Projects and Support

INFRASTRUCTURE

The IT Department continued performing weekly maintenance and monthly operating system and cyber security updates, continually monitoring and managing data backups, performing break/fix and resolving issues. The team works collaboratively to support production and infrastructure issues.

In addition, the Amazon AWS resources, users and API access associated with the account were mapped out. The team is putting a plan together to limit and control access to ensure proper management and security of assets. The team also assisted third-party developers with the configurations of the environment and to compute resources for supporting the engaged initiatives.

Finally, the team assisted the Board's volunteer committee in evaluating the IT environment with specific focus on the AS400 and associated processes.

TD SUPPORT

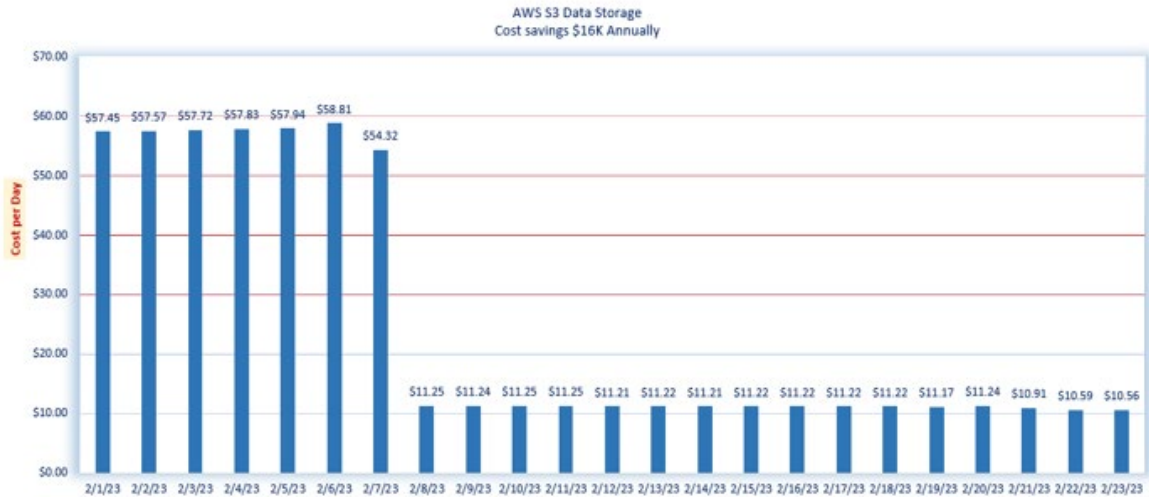
We have been supporting the return to face-to-face play by bringing tournament directors back into the ACBL domain and providing new hardware purchases and configuration or updates to existing devices.

NABCs

The team provided support for a successful Fall NABC and is preparing for future NABCs.

AWS CLOUD

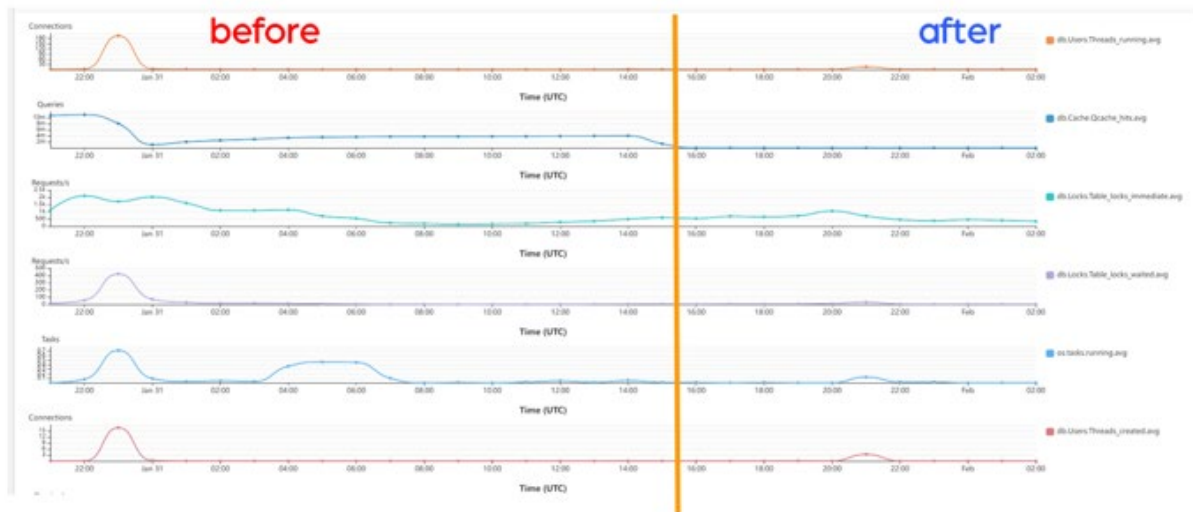
Through a collaborative effort between IT developers and the Bridge Operations department, the amount and cost of S3 data storage has been reduced to 80%, equaling \$16,000 savings annually.



Additionally, after a strong effort of both teams in troubleshooting, the resource usage has been lowered by 83%. In time, this will provide a cost savings, though the amount is unclear at this time.

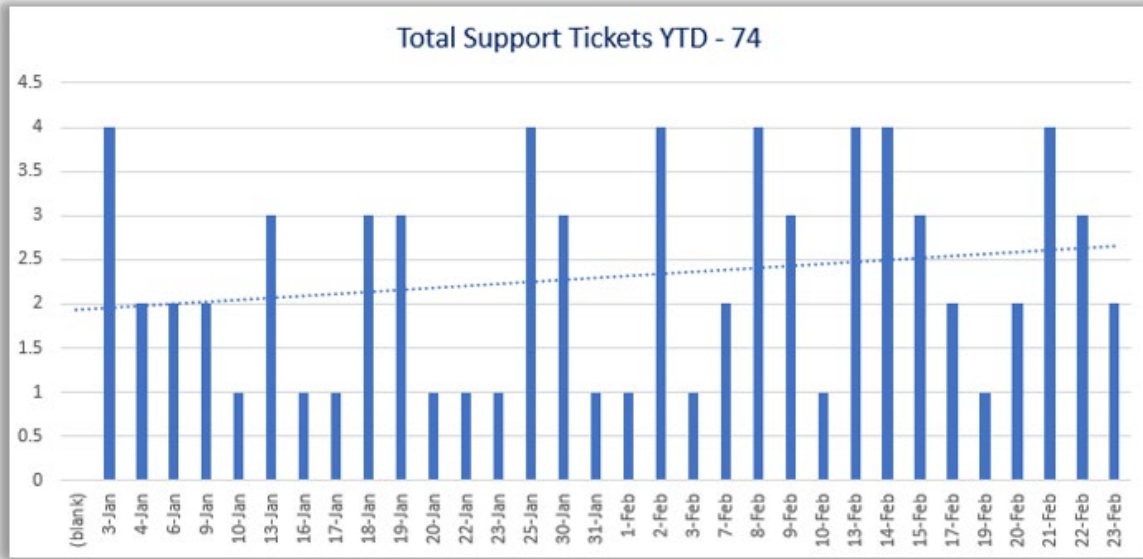
Significantly, a major issue was resolved regarding MyACBL. The web portal had been crashing two to three times a week in early evenings. This problem has been fixed, and the related databases are in process of being upgraded to a later version, which will also increase performance.

The chart below shows the reduction of resource utilization after resolutions and improvements were made.



IT SERVICE DESK

The team provided direct support to ACBL employees at Headquarters in the field, both remotely and locally. Year to date, there have been 74 tickets logged for direct user and member support. This does not include tickets or cases encompassed in other projects.



CLUB AND MEMBER SERVICES SUPPORT

The team has been actively working with Club and Member Services to improve the level of support provided to clubs and members. This includes weekly meetings to discuss current issues, needs, events and upcoming changes.

Following research into call reporting, the team created the opportunity to set up a verbal bulletin for callers to hear when there’s an active event. The effort is ongoing.

Marketing

Digital Marketing Efforts

EMAIL MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The majority of communication with members is done through mass email campaigns, whether informational or promotional. While several email campaigns go to the membership as a whole, frequently the audience is broken down and targeted with slightly different messaging. As of February 10, 91 email campaigns have been sent in 2023 (not including automated emails, like billing or ACBL Live), which means that about 10 per week are drafted, edited, formatted and sent.

The ACBL membership continues to remain a very engaged audience with the average open rate for emails at 54% and the average click-through rate at 3.5%. The average rates for our industry are 39% and 1.7% respectively. This shows our members are interested in receiving our emails and frequently click on links in the emails. To ensure we don’t oversaturate member inboxes, calendars for sending emails are carefully managed.

Emails with the most engagement (opens and clicks on links) were those that promoted the Spring NABC, reminders of the Bridge Bulletin being posted online (sent to guest members and juniors) and weekly Retro It’s Your Call problems. Emails about club sanction renewals

and the Covid protocol update had the least engagement.

At the start of 2023, Email Services moved from using the Mail Chimp platform to send mass emails to Mailer Lite, saving 55% of the cost per month. Using Mailer Lite has also simplified utilizing A/B testing for our mass emails. This allows us to track the performance of differing subject lines, content and designs.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The ACBL continues to utilize multiple social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, primarily Facebook) to engage with current members and others interested in bridge.

As of February 15, Our Facebook audience is the largest with 12,185 followers, an increase from 11,976 in November 2022. The average Facebook post reaches more than 5500 people and includes a mix of topics from ACBL news and NABC coverage to games and memes. Posts with the most engagement included our weekly Retro It's Your Call discussions and photos from the NABCs (reaching up to 8300).

The ACBL also uses Twitter, and this account has 4064 followers as of February 10, a slight decrease from 4081 in November 2022. The ACBL Instagram also has had an increase in followers: an increase to 2216 in February from 2175 in November 2022. For Instagram, the team has created short videos to compliment various initiatives and generate more interest. A possible ACBL Tik Tok account is being researched.

Public Relations

Obsidian Public Relations assisted with various media relations and digital advertising campaigns. The firm also continuously monitored news trends locally and nationally so that these could be capitalized on with media outreach. In addition, the firm monitored any mentions of the ACBL in media.

For the 2022 Fall NABC, Obsidian created a welcome letter for attendees that included information on health and safety protocols and highlighted specific events.

MEDIA RELATIONS

The firm distributed announcements of winners from the 2022 Fall NABC to their local newspapers to generate coverage of the players, the event and bridge. Obsidian connected the Douglas County Post-Gazette in Nebraska with winners Andrew Clements and Jonathan Cohn for an interview. A reporter for the Washingtonian magazine in Washington D.C. requested additional information about winner Eric Mayefsky.

Additionally, the firm led various efforts to garner media coverage for the 2022 Fall NABC itself, including composing and distributing a news release about the tournament to Phoenix-area media and a news advisory with details about the Charity Foundation check ceremony.

For the 2023 Spring NABC, the agency distributed media materials, including a news release for the tournament and calendar listings for the Learn Bridge in a Day course. Additional for this NABC, the firm drafted targeted posts for Nextdoor and Facebook about LBIAD that local committee members can share in their social media circles. The same wording was shared

with members in the New Orleans area through an email campaign.

Prior to the check presentation ceremony, the firm will develop talking points for those involved in case media attend. After the check presentation, Obsidian will distribute a news release and share images from the ceremony with New Orleans media.

DIGITAL ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

Obsidian completed various digital ads in the Meta platform (the parent company for Facebook and Instagram), primarily for the Boost F2F program.

For the pilot Boost program, the firm developed messaging and accompanying ad design, built lead generation forms, curated target audience lists and managed the running of ads for approximately 30 campaigns.

For Phase 2 of the Boost program, the firm refined design elements and messaging, built new lead generation forms, curated new target audience lists and managed the running of ads for about 50 campaigns. Two waves are currently in progress.

The firm has also developed and deployed Meta ads for various Learn Bridge in a Day workshops. The initial ads for the course at the 2022 Fall NABC generated 587 link clicks; 21,308 user reach; 53,304 impressions for a total cost of \$0.78 per link click; \$459.97 spent. A secondary ad led to 75 clicks; 6023 user reach; 42,510 impressions for a total cost of \$1.07 per link click; \$80 spent. The campaign for the LBIAD to be held at the 2023 Spring NABC was launched on February 16.

Targeted ads for the 2022 Fall NABC were aimed at local members as well as a “look alike” audience (users with similar interests and demographics). This led to 547 link clicks; 6084 user reach; 42,510 impressions; \$1.37 cost of per link click; \$749.95 spent.

Creative Services

With the new, dedicated membership card printer in place, assembly and sending of the new member packets has begun. The packets are assembled by hand by the human resources and marketing teams.

NABC signage and collateral continue to be updated, improved and replaced as needed. Utilization of pop-up banners as signage and promotion has been expanded and successful. Pop-up banners vary in size from two feet to eight feet tall. For the 2023 Spring NABC, there will be up to 25 pop-up banners. Additional smaller pop-up banners to help advertise tables with materials for members will be in place for the Summer and Fall NABCs.

Several logos for upcoming NABCs (Louisville, Las Vegas and Toronto) have been designed and finalized. Branding guides will be created to help enforce the brand across all platforms. In addition, a new digital form was created to send to local committees to formally gather input and streamline the process for logo design.

Additional digital designs recently finished include a revised concept for Educational Foundation month, art to support social media posts (such as Teacher Appreciation Day and

Tongue Twister Day), updated imagery for the website and digital ads to be used by Bridge Base Online. For the end of 2022, a corresponding music video was developed to go with the virtual holiday card and parody, “Bridge Inside.”

Standardized, branded email signatures for Regional Directors were designed and are now automatically added to emails sent from official Regional Director email addresses. Name badges were designed and ordered for members of the Advisory Council and the Charity Foundation.

Guest Membership Program

We continue to promote and grow Guest Memberships with more than 4300 guests coming through the program since it started. To date, 1862 Guest Members have converted to regular memberships and of the 946 who finished their first year, 670 renewed for at least another year (240 for three years). As of February 10, there are currently 1254 active Guest Members.

In addition to regular ACBL emails, Guest Members also receive monthly reminders and links to the online version of the Bridge Bulletin, 18 weekly Bridge Tips (duration of membership) and promotions of special first-year membership rate.

Guest members are continually one of the most engaged with email communications.

Recruitment Incentives

ACBL’s Recruiter Incentives program pays teachers and club managers for bringing in new members. Recruiters receive \$10 when someone joins and \$10 each year when the member renews for years two and three.

In 2022, a total of \$22,770 was sent to 565 recruiters. Note that the total includes payments for fourth quarter of 2021 as these payments are sent in January of the following year. Fourth quarter 2022 payments totaling \$6030 were sent to 256 recruiters in January 2023.

Cooperative Advertising Program

The Cooperative Advertising Program (CAP) reimburses 50% of the cost of an ad campaign up to a maximum \$500 reimbursement per campaign. The program continues to be popular as more and more clubs and teachers have started offering beginner classes again. Qualifying ads must promote bridge lessons and/or newcomer programs and contain the ACBL logo.

In 2022, we paid \$23,209 in reimbursements to 53 recipients, which is more than double the total reimbursements for 2021 but still only 42% of the reimbursements processed during the same period pre-pandemic in 2019. As of February 14, we have processed CAP requests totaling \$5239 for 18 recipients.

Alzheimer's Association Partnership

In 2022, about 350 units and clubs raised \$1,003,075 for The Longest Day, the yearly fundraiser that supports patients, caregivers and researchers, bringing the total raised by ACBL thus far to just over \$8.8 million. Along with these direct donations, \$28,000 in table fees were donated by ACBL, and BBO gave an additional \$5000.

The team is working with the Alzheimer's Association national office to finalize options for curated caregiver and patient support opportunities for ACBL members. The specially designed support system will include a mix of on-demand and scheduled resources, like webinars, virtual support groups and online message boards.

Following presentations from the Alzheimer's Association, the team is prepared to send members a recap on the latest progress in the field and launch the 2023 The Longest Day initiative in late March.

Element3 Health Partnership

The ACBL has entered a partnership with Element3 Health, a third-party resource that coordinates financial benefits from healthcare insurers associated with Medicare. Many healthcare insurers provide financial incentives so that the insured maintain physical and mental wellness through social, engaging activities like bridge. With Element3 Health's assistance, the ACBL will be able to harness the financial benefits and share them with ACBL members.

If the member is part of an associated Medicare insurance program (Element3 Health will check individual members' status), they can play bridge to earn credits toward a free additional year of ACBL membership. Playing in club games, tournaments, VACB games and ACBL sanctioned online tournaments will earn credits.

Currently, Element3 Health services more than 12 million subscribers through other partnerships. Once the Marketplace (see "Marketplace" section) is operational, Element3 Health will promote the Marketplace to these 12 million subscribers.

Boost F2F Bridge

Boost Face-to-Face Bridge launched in August 2022. It is a joint initiative with the ACBL Education Foundation and supports a return to face-to-face bridge by running social media ad campaigns that generate leads for teachers offering in-person, beginning bridge classes and their affiliated clubs. Boost Teachers are required to promote and offer Guest Memberships, as well as coordinate with their partner club to offer opportunities to play at the club. Obsidian Public Relations is assisting with the execution of the ad campaigns.

In the pilot round, we worked with 30 teachers, representing 14 districts. \$500 was the target spend for each social media ad campaign. The average cost per campaign including the agency cost was \$574, and the total cost was \$17,200. The campaigns generated 1264 leads, with a reach of over 148,000 and 344,000 impressions. To date this has resulted in more than 140 new beginner bridge students, generating over \$12,000 in revenue to the teachers from course

registration fees; about 20% of those students became Guest Members (2.2% of the leads), and to date 12 have become ACBL Members (eight converted from Guest Membership and four who directly joined).

Our second round is for courses starting the first quarter of 2023. In this round, attendance in an online orientation session was required to ensure teachers were equipped for success and understood the importance of promoting Guest Membership. We have 60 campaigns, representing 20 districts (including nine new districts), with 51 completed as of February 9. As of that date, the completed campaigns have generated 4661 leads, 275 students, 59 Guest Members and 10 Members. (Note: Many of these courses are still running, and we expect numbers to increase as Guest Membership/Full Membership is typically offered toward the end of a course). Our ad cost for those completed campaigns is \$28,400, and to date those teachers have reported \$32,300 in course fees collected.

Although harder to quantify, another significant benefit is the future potential recruitment of the leads, as well as visibility for bridge. Anecdotally we have had feedback from multiple teachers that they have picked up students for more advanced classes, as well as new players for club games. Moreover, they feel the prospect list that they are building from these leads provides rich potential for future classes. We have also heard that some of the students in their classes did remark on seeing the ads, although they did not show up as a “lead,” and this got them thinking about learning the game.

Marketplace

The Marketplace is a new initiative designed to facilitate connecting prospective students with teachers. The initial focus is to provide an interactive digital platform where new and beginning players can quickly and easily find in-person or online classes and even newcomer games as they advance in their bridge journey.

Currently if someone wants to find bridge lessons in their area, the “Find a Teacher” tool allows them to search by zip code and provides a list of nearby teachers; however, it does not show what classes are offered or indeed if they have any upcoming offerings. In order to find the right fit in terms of location, time, teaching style, etc., the only option for prospective students is to contact each teacher and try and find something that works. This is a huge barrier to entry. An online marketplace that provides up-to-date listings directly from teachers will not only benefit our teachers, but also ensure anyone looking to learn bridge can quickly and easily find the resources that will work for them.

In addition, the Marketplace would allow for social media advertising to be run either in targeted markets or nationally. In these ads, prospective students will be directed to the marketplace where they can search based on their criteria (e.g., topic, location, time, teacher profile, etc.) and easily find upcoming classes that suit them.

We are working with the Lokion firm to identify the best platform for the Marketplace/Hub. To date, we have held three workshops with stakeholders, including representatives from the ACBLEF, the ABTA and several individual bridge teachers to get input regarding the project. The journey-mapping process is set to begin in March. Once all the workshops are completed, Lokion will search for the platform that best meets our current and future needs and then make their recommendation.

Education

ACBL Intro to Bridge (Online)

We are currently not offering the online iteration of ACBL Intro to Bridge. The course was initially developed based on teacher input that teaching newcomers was challenging, and they would like students to come to them knowing the basics. Online ACBL Intro to Bridge offered a launchpad to further lessons. Additionally, the pandemic reduced the number of newcomer bridge classes being offered, although there was still a demand to learn the game.

The ACBL taught 48 courses in 2021-2022 to nearly 1600 students. Teachers were surveyed to identify who was offering follow-up courses appropriate for ACBL Intro to Bridge alumni and listings of those offerings were provided to all graduates. In addition, we emailed the District Presidents offering to send a communication on behalf of their I/N or Education Coordinator to our students in order to connect them with their local bridge community.

We currently have a list of over 320 people interested in taking the online course who have asked to be notified when new dates are listed and receive new requests daily.

Access to the course will be offered complimentary as an earned benefit to certified ACBL Best Practices, Online Teacher Certification and ABTA teachers. Experienced teachers who do not have at least one of those qualifications will be able to apply to receive the materials for free on a case-by-case basis. Course materials will include a teacher outline, slides, lesson videos, hand files (PBN and PDF) and printable student workbooks. Student books are also available to purchase online on Amazon.

ACBL Intro to Bridge (Face-to-Face)

As a part of our efforts to support a return to face-to-face bridge, we have adapted our successful instructional design of ACBL Intro to Bridge Online and developed an in-person course. The new course is split into two series with a combined total of 18 two-hour classes. The goal is to provide a cards-in-hand, best-practices approach that enables students to learn and enjoy the game and be ready to start playing at the newcomer level in their local clubs.

The course is currently being piloted in Florida, Texas and California, and we are receiving positive feedback from both the teachers and students. Pilots will wrap up in April, and the program will be released shortly thereafter. Access to the course will be offered complimentary as an earned benefit to certified Best Practices teachers, ABTA Master Teachers as well as used in support of our School Bridge, College and Lifelong Learning programs. Experienced teachers who are not Best Practices certified or part of the other programs will be able to apply to receive the materials for free on a case-by-case basis. Others will be able to purchase a license for a TBD fee, most likely under \$100. Course materials will include a teacher outline, slides, lesson videos, hand files (PBN and PDF) and printable student workbooks. Student books are also available to purchase online on Amazon.

Online Teacher Certification Program

The ACBL, with support from the ACBL Educational Foundation, developed the ACBL Online Teacher Certification Workshop, which was launched in August 2020. This workshop focuses on how to teach engaging online lessons. It exposes teachers to several different online teaching tools and provides opportunities to practice using them as well as role modeling and teaching several teaching best practices that are effective online.

Similar to the in-person Best Practices Teacher Workshop, the online program is highly interactive for the participants and stresses limiting “teacher talking” time in favor of active student participation. Since the program began, 220 teachers have graduated, and 135 have earned certification. Although demand for this course has slowed, we still do get requests for this workshop and just completed one with a smaller group of teachers.

Best Practices Teacher Certification Program

The Best Practices Teacher Certification workshop was rolled out in early 2018 to replace the previous Teacher Accreditation Program (TAP) and focuses on training teachers how to teach rather than what to teach.

Certification is not guaranteed, and proficiency assessments are offered after each workshop to allow participants to earn the Best Practices Teacher Certification. Best Practices teachers receive a gold pin and exclusive marketing materials and are also highlighted in the Find a Teacher search results on ACBL’s website.

Workshops are held at the three NABCs, the Gatlinburg Regional and when requested by clubs, units or districts. In 2023, two districts have already held workshops at their regionals and certified 22 new Best Practices Teachers. Currently we have 325 Best Practices Certified Teachers.

In addition to holding the workshop at the Spring NABC in New Orleans, we will also be working with four (4) facilitator candidates with the hopes of certifying them to lead the workshop. One of the candidates is from the Montreal area and plans to offer workshops in French if they earn the facilitator certification.

School Bridge Program

<i>Programs</i>	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023
	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
College	15	29	3	20	15	29	9	4	1	3	6	6	4
High	20	11	11	29	20	11	6	0	0	1	1	1	2
Middle	32	43	57	68	32	43	10	0	3	4	4	8	8
Elementary	66	47	14	99	66	47	30	1	4	1	1	1	5
Total	263		309		225		60		17		28		19

<i>Teacher Stipends</i>	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
US	\$46,686	\$43,950	\$33,300	\$15,050	\$4,200	\$5600	\$3500
Canada	\$27,665	\$20,650	\$14,000	\$4,550	\$350	\$0	\$350
Total	\$74,351	\$64,600	\$47,300	\$19,600	\$4,550	\$5600	\$3850

Covid caused the school bridge program to dwindle, and we are hoping to reverse that with the rollout of a couple of new offerings, including our new face-to-face ACBL Intro to Bridge curriculum.

These ACBL Intro to Bridge videos are a tool that less experienced bridge teachers can use either in the classroom or as a resource to prepare their own lessons. If the videos are used for instruction, then all that is needed is someone with enough understanding to facilitate the learning activities. One of the teachers piloting the program (new to teaching bridge) loves how all of the program components work together and how easy it is to deliver. We hope this program will allow us to reach schools that were previously not able to have programs.

College Programs

Thanks to a generous grant from the ACBL Educational Foundation, we can support student bridge clubs and coaches with stipends and bridge supplies. Currently we are supporting more than 20 colleges and universities with supplies, books and stipends.

Through a partnership with BBO, college students have access to the College Bridge Online (CBO) Club, a free and exclusive online bridge club which offers daily individual practice tournaments, free robot rental and bimonthly special tournaments with masterpoint prizes. Since they began in October 2017, CBO members have logged over 138,500 individual entries, over 1.1 million boards and almost 15 million tricks in these tournaments.

For the 2023 Collegiate Bridge Bowl, to be held the second weekend of the Summer NABC in Chicago, the ACBL and ACBL Educational Foundation plan to award travel packages to six teams and 12 pairs through online tournaments this spring. The first team tournament awarding travel packages will be held February 26, and 22 teams from 16 colleges and universities will be competing. More information can be found at acbl.org/bridgebowl.

Lifelong Learning Programs

The ACBL is an officially recognized Osher Lifelong Learning Institute curriculum resource, but we also support bridge through several other unassociated lifelong learning programs. Face-to-face continuing education declined during the Covid-19 pandemic, but since January 2023, we are supporting eight Lifelong Learning classes with materials and/or stipends. We expect to add more programs in the Spring. Lifelong Learning teachers are encouraged to sign their students up for guest membership.

We plan to offer the new face-to-face ACBL Intro to Bride curriculum as an option for these

programs in addition to the ACBL Bridge Series that is currently offered.

Editorial

The January–March 2023 issues of the Bridge Bulletin featured stories on the results of the Fall 2022 NABC in Phoenix; the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Phoenix; profile of 2022 Player of the Year Zach Grossack; promotional material for the Spring 2023 NABC in New Orleans; profile of Honorary Member of the Year Betty Starzec; profile of Top 500 winner Mark Itabashi; profiles of Volunteer Members of the Year Franco Baseggio and Brian Platnick; profile of Goodwill Member of the Year Morris Jones; report of AARP partnership with Larry Cohen; Charity Foundation report; report of US Junior Team Trials; and Board news updates.

The hardcopy Daily Bulletins at the NABCs will no longer be printed. The Daily Bulletins will continue to be available online. The expense of producing and distributing the paper Daily Bulletins topped \$125K in 2022.

Office of National Recorder

The Office of National Recorder team consists of National Recorder Jeff Edelstein, Assistant National Recorder Justin Coniglio, Administrative Coordinator Sabrina Goley, and as of December 2022, Rebecca Brown has joined the Office in a volunteer capacity as Adjunct National Recorder. Rebecca brings a wealth of experience to the Recorder's office, having served as District 16's President and Disciplinary Chair as well as holding degrees in both law and psychology.

While Rebecca mainly handles conduct issues, Nancy Strachan (District 2) manages Player Memo files, and Mark Smith (District 9) helps investigate Player Memos and prepare evidence for hearings. Franco Baseggio and Brian Platnick, creators of EDGAR, assist the office by providing statistical analyses and complete hand record spreadsheets.

The team continues to provide phone and email support to members and district officials involved in the disciplinary process. Mr. Edelstein and Mr. Coniglio also serve as Charging Party Advocates.

Since assuming the role of National Recorder in mid-April, Mr. Edelstein has sent recorder complaints for 91 ACBL members for online cheating. All 91 recorder complaints have led to formal charges being filed against those members. So far, 39 of the charges have resulted in Negotiated Resolutions, 25 have resulted in hearings in front of OEOC, 22 have resulted in scheduled hearings in front of OEOC and five have resulted in Resignations to Avoid Discipline.

The office has also been actively involved in district disciplinary hearings by providing direction and assistance and has prosecuted seven conduct cases stemming from the NABCs in Providence and Phoenix. These seven conduct cases have all resulted in findings of responsibility against the Charged Parties. Furthermore, the office is currently investigating more than 50 members for online cheating.

The Recorder's Office has implemented several changes regarding methodology and practices. A standing practice now employed is to process each new Player Memo within 24-48 hours. We

have standardized the formatting of evidence as it is presented to the OEOC for hearing consideration, while endeavoring to evolve packet submissions to become more panel-friendly over time. The case turnover time has been cut dramatically; advancement of a player memo to formal charges can happen in as little as 10 days if necessary.

Additionally, the office has shifted from using volunteers to using EDGAR as an investigatory and data retrieval tool. The team is now continuing to aggressively weed out current cheaters while also prosecuting cheaters from 2020 and 2021. In older cases, EDGAR is being used not only to investigate the pairs but also to provide a complete collection of hands for the Charged Parties to access for their defense. In current cases, our focus is to use current hands because the Charged Parties can easily access the hand records and, theoretically, can better remember the hands. We believe this last point is very important as it is the fairest way for Charged Parties to mount a defense against cheating charges.

These new aggressive approaches allow the office to rapidly prosecute current cheating cases, and access to EDGAR data facilitates pursuit of older cases more easily. These changes also create a more level playing field for Charged Parties to defend themselves. In 2022, there were all-time highs for Negotiated Resolutions, OEOC hearings and disciplined ACBL members.

In summary, while many challenges remain to create a fairer playing environment for all our members, this Recorder’s Office has led proactively to improve conditions in a myriad of areas. We are increasing support to district recorders and club managers in matters that relate to conduct and ethics and providing increased education in these quarters to promote a grassroots-style, heightened awareness of these issues.

ACBL management, the Board of Directors, and this Office are working diligently to implement a more scalable system to efficiently tackle the problem of cheating in our game and 2023 should see major changes and improvements.

**CASE STATUS UPDATE, OFFICE OF NATIONAL RECORDER
APRIL 18, 2022 through FEBRUARY 21, 2023**

Recorder Complaints Filed	Charge Letters Filed	Negotiated Resolutions	OEOC Hearings Held	Hearings Pending	Resignations To Avoid Discipline
91	91	39	25	22	5