

# ACBL MANAGEMENT REPORT

## Fall 2021

### ***Bridge Services***

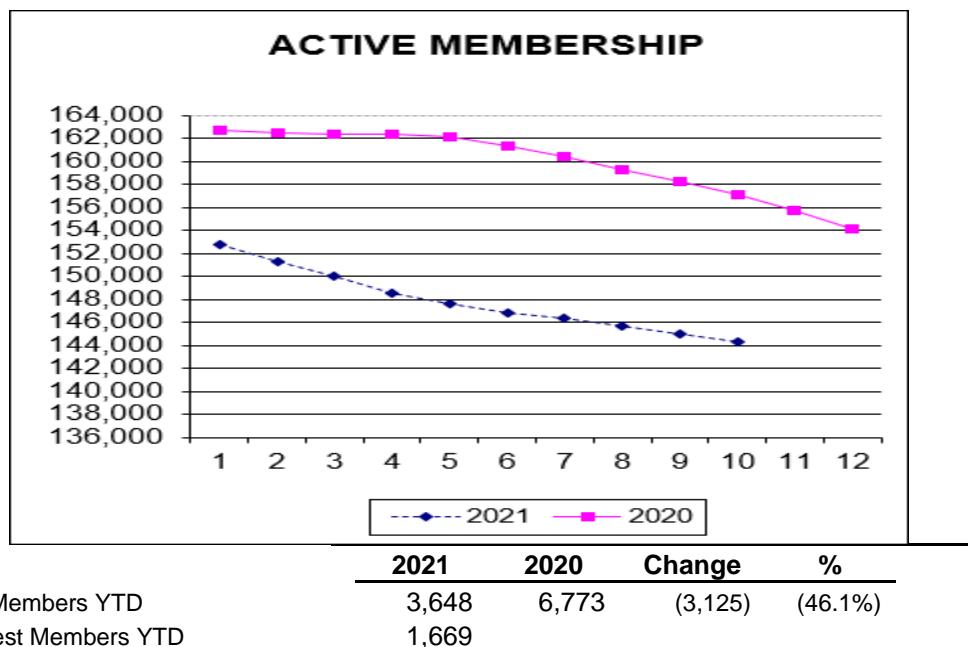
#### ***Club and Membership Services***

While ACBL's membership count has continued to decline slightly each month, the pace has begun to slow. Total membership is down 9.4% compared to the prior year. Note that the chart below does not include our new Guest Membership Program which includes over 2,500 new Guest Members since September 2020.

**Active Membership Statistics**

as of Nov 1-2021

Membership Category	2021	2020	Change	%
Life Masters	44,589	47,221	(2,632)	(5.6%)
Non-Life Masters	95,381	107,692	(12,311)	(11.4%)
Total Paying Members	139,970	154,913	(14,943)	(9.6%)
Active Unpaid LM	4,336	4,301	35	0.8%
<b>Total Members</b>	<b>144,306</b>	<b>159,214</b>	<b>(14,908)</b>	<b>(9.4%)</b>



Club sanctioning renewals for 2022 opened up in early November. 2,300 clubs renewed their sanction for 2021, and we anticipate that over 2,100 will renew for 2022.

Virtual Club Games' table count has continued to drop, particularly in October when we saw a 13% decline in a single month. The table count for Bridge Base Online (BBO) operating as a club has climbed slightly, helping to offset a portion of the loss from Virtual Clubs. Face-to-face tables had been growing significantly (the over 50,000 July table count was up from 18,000 tables in May and 38,000 tables in June) but the Delta variant pushed things in the wrong direction over the last three months as reported below. October has shown a slight recovery but not enough to offset the decline in Virtual Club tables.

	<b>Monthly Table Count</b>			
	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>
Virtual Clubs	76,968	74,234	76,474	66,370
F2F Clubs	54,433	47,478	47,020	51,378
BBO	210,634	220,527	208,991	215,853

Note that, as of the end of October 2021, 1,528 of the approximately 2,500 pre-coronavirus pandemic ACBL-sanctioned bridge clubs have returned to in-person play versus 885 clubs at the end of June.

## ***Field Operations***

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The Field Operations team ran two more online Regional-rated events during August and October and completed our fourth North American Online Bridge Championships (NAOBC) in July. The Summer NAOBC attracted 2,175 tables, a 12% increase from 1,893 in the Spring.

	<b>NAOBC Table Count</b>			
	<u>Spring 2020</u>	<u>Fall 2020</u>	<u>Spring 2021</u>	<u>Summer 2021</u>
NAOBC	361	1,539	1,893	2,175

The final table count for August's *Virtual Vacation Regional* and October's *Tricks and Treats Regional* were 4,601 and 3,541 tables, respectively. As reported in June, our team continues to try various measures, including a change-up to the schedule, to improve table count, but the enthusiasm for online Regionals has continued to wane.

	<b>Online Regionals Table Count</b>			
	<u>April 2021</u>	<u>June 2021</u>	<u>August 2021</u>	<u>October 2021</u>
Table Count	6,354	5,120	4,601	3,541
% Change		(19.4%)	(10.1%)	(23.0%)

The other major tasks that we are working on include the ACBL's cashless roll-out and the return to face-to-face tournaments – in particular, our first NABC in two years being held in Austin, TX.

ACBL Tournament Directors continue to provide live help on BBO and online Zoom sessions to assist players with playing online.

## **NABC Services**

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### **Meeting Services Operations**

In support of the return of face-to-face bridge and the Fall NABC, we developed and implemented a “safe-return” plan. This was presented to staff and the Board of Directors, and then communicated to all members jointly with the Marketing team. The ACBL has contracted with three partners as part of this plan. VOW Digital Health (VOW) will be utilized for vaccination clearance, CrowdRX will be used for member screening and COVID-19 protocol compliance, and Ascension Seton will be used for on-site medical services.

Due to significant compression in the U.S. trucking industry, our longtime shipping partner was not able to accommodate our need for shipping to Austin. However, we were able secure a new shipper well in advance of our decision to continue the Fall NABC. Truck day was moved up to accommodate additional shipping needs, and the trucks left ACBL headquarters in route to Austin with no issues on November 5.

### **Housing Management**

#### **2021 FALL NABC, AUSTIN, TX**

Prior to management’s final determination to hold the Fall NABC, we proactively renegotiated the hotel contracts with both the JW Marriott and the Marriott Downtown, reducing the potential attrition liability and food and beverage spending requirement an estimated \$600,000 and \$50,000, respectively. We move forward to the Fall NABC with no attrition risk and a significantly lower food and beverage minimum.

There has been a major dip in the hotel room block pick up (see graph below), completely mitigated by the elimination of attrition risk. We currently have 6,146 room nights picked up, which is 49% of the total room block.



## **2022 SPRING NABC, RENO, NV**

Patron member room blocks for the Spring NABC opened September 15, and 862 total room nights have been booked within the Patron block. General membership room blocks opened November 2, and, about 36 hours later, we were already at 2,625 total room nights. 9,780 total room nights are committed (after the hotel permitted the ACBL to reduce the room block by 10%).

## **2022 SUMMER NABC, PROVIDENCE, RI**

Patron member room blocks for the Summer NABC are scheduled to open Tuesday, November 16. General membership room blocks are scheduled to open Tuesday, January 18.

## **2022 FALL NABC, PHOENIX, AZ**

Patron member room blocks for the Fall NABC are scheduled to open Tuesday, March 22. General membership room blocks are scheduled to open Tuesday, May 24.

### ***Future NABC Locations***

During September, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the ACBL moving forward with contracting with Memphis hotels for the 2025 Spring NABC and with San Diego hotels for the 2026 Fall NABC. Detailed contract negotiations continue and are expected to finalize in the coming weeks.

Starting this winter, the NABC Site Selection Committee will begin working through recommendations to bring to the Board. The goal is to fill the gaps in the schedule and eventually move toward an annual rhythm of approvals for the entire year, five to six years in advance. For the fourth quarter of 2021 and all of 2022, the Site Selection Committee will have a small amount of “catch up” to get into that rhythm. We currently lack locations for Summer 2026, all of 2027, and Summer and Fall 2028:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Fall</u>
2022	Reno, NV	Providence, RI	Phoenix, AZ
2023	New Orleans, LA	Chicago, IL	Atlanta, GA
2024	Louisville, KY	Toronto, Ontario	Las Vegas, NV
2025	Memphis, TN	Philadelphia, PA	San Francisco, CA
2026	St Louis, MO		San Diego, CA
2027			
2028	Reno, NV		
2029			
2030		Philadelphia, PA	

### ***NABC Budgeting***

Early budgeting for 2022 involves estimating lower NABC attendance than the typical historical averages based on a collective management opinion that we will have a slow back to face-to-face play “ramp up” period. Because of this expectation, combined with two of our 2022 locations in more expensive convention centers (Providence and Phoenix), we are projecting losses in all 2022 NABCs except the Spring NABC in Reno. However, it is always

possible to increase the revenue projections should the ACBL membership begin to increase their attendance at face-to-face events earlier than expected. Current budgeting reflects a conservative estimate of the membership's NABC and other tournament attendance and should be expected to adjust depending on how the ACBL membership responds over the coming months.

## ***Finance***

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Overall, September 2021 was another good month compared to budget with the continued success of online game play. Revenues totaled \$964,000, \$21,000 less than budget. Online play generated \$382,000, \$16,000 under budget. September expenses were below budget by \$64,000, or 6%.

There was a \$4,000 gain on foreign exchange conversion. As required by the Codification, the exchange rate was reviewed again during the week beginning September 20, 2021. As a result, the exchange rate was adjusted from 1.23 to 1.27.

For September 2021, the net loss from operations totaled \$17,000 as compared to the budgeted loss of \$59,000.

Year-to-date (YTD) bottom line remains strong despite the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. YTD gain from operations was \$1.4 million, exceeding budget by \$892,000.

Investments totaled \$7.9 million with a YTD unrealized gain of \$101,000. Investment allocation is in line with Codification requirements.

There have been no capital expenditures through September 2021.

The 2020 ACBL retirement plan audit received a clean opinion and was timely filed. All 2020 required tax filings for ACBL, ACBL Charity Foundation, and the ACBL Educational Foundation were filed by their required deadline.

## ***Human Resources***

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### ***Staffing***

#### **HEADCOUNT**

Headquarters – 52 full time employees

Field – 11 full time, 123 part time, and one furloughed employee

#### **NEW HIRES AND PROMOTIONS**

Michael Williams, Software Developer, joined the ACBL on October 11, 2021. Michael is a full-stack developer with experience in JavaScript (ES6), HTML5, SQL/Sequelize/Postgres/Objection, MongoDB, React/Redux, Node.js, and more technologies. He earned a BS in Chemistry from Northern Arizona University and his Full-Stack Engineering Certification from University of Arizona. Michael reports to Angela Ross.

Cayce Read, Scrum Master/Delivery Manager, joined the ACBL on October 18, 2021. She received her BBA in Management Information Systems from the University of Memphis and has 20+ years of IT experience in security, training, and analytics. Cayce will work with our IT teams to facilitate work performed, following the processes the team has agreed upon, and eliminate obstacles to the completion of tasks and achievement of goals. Cayce reports to Susie Cordell.

Shandrea Allen, Club & Member Services Representative, joined the ACBL on August 20, 2021. She has over 20 years of customer service experience in the casino and financial services industries. Shandrea reports to Sherry Terraciano.

Sharon Coleman, Club & Member Services Representative, joined the ACBL on November 11, 2021. She has over 21 years of customer service experience in telecommunications, financial services, and pest control companies. Sharon reports to Sherry Terraciano.

Sherry Terraciano has been promoted to Manager of Club & Member Services. Sherry joined ACBL in 2015 and served as Special Events Game Specialist. Her commitment to customer service and knowledge of our members prepared Sherry for her new role. Sherry reports to Greg Coles.

Crystal Mann has stepped into the role of Tournament Administration Coordinator. In this role, she will provide tournament-related support and information to Units, Districts, volunteers, Tournament Directors, and other ACBL staff. Crystal, a long-time bridge player, club director and club manager, joined the ACBL in 2015 as a part-time Tournament Director. Crystal reports to Greg Coles.

#### OPEN POSITIONS

Software Developer

Assistant National Recorder

### ***Employee Benefits***

For 2022, Cigna will continue as the ACBL's provider of medical, dental, and vision benefits, and the plans will not change. Medical insurance premiums will increase by 5% (lower than the U.S. average increase of 7.8%); dental and vision insurance premiums will not change. We currently have 63 employees who are eligible to enroll in benefits.

## ***Information Technology***

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### ***Application Development Projects***

#### MARKETING AND MEMBER SERVICES

The IT Department delivered the Marketing team's rebranding of the ACBL website. The work consisted of changes to three different websites – my.acbl.org, tournaments.acbl.org, and a legacy application website, web3.acbl.org. Changes to the logo, header, footer, images, side navigation, and forms have been completed on all internal websites. In addition, the IT team assisted in preparing the production environment and deployment to assist the Marketing

team in deploying the acbl.org rebranding site. (See also Marketing–Digital Marketing Efforts–ACBL Website below.)

#### BRIDGE OPERATIONS/TOURNAMENTS

The IT Department upgraded the current masterpoint file upload process using Amazon Web Services (AWS) (a reliable, scalable and inexpensive pay-as-you-go cloud computing service) that supports a heavier file load when processing and correcting files.

Working with the Bridge Operations and Marketing teams, IT continued the development of the registration application for members to preregister for upcoming face-to-face tournaments. In addition to capturing the businesses' requirements, we have on-boarded a third-party vendor to help with its development, off-boarded transitioning employees, and on-boarded new employees to deliver this application as well as a tournament administration application portal. The planned release of Phase 1 is early January 2022.

In preparation for the return to in-person bridge play, the technology utilized by clubs to upload their game results has been rewritten and is currently in use, improving the availability and use of that technology.

#### OPERATIONS SUPPORT

The IT Department continued its support of online bridge play, supporting both our clubs and members. We supported the Summer NAOBC and numerous ACBL-sponsored online tournaments. The internal team spent most of their time troubleshooting and correcting previous operational applications and legacy systems. These legacy systems are outdated, not scalable, and are difficult to support. On the IT roadmap for 2022, we plan to replace, move to new technology platforms, and/or decommission these legacy systems. Operational issues researched and resolved since July include issues with membership renewal credit card transactions multiplying numerous times; Canadian exchange rate adjustments; masterpoint duplication; troubleshooting masterpoint ranking issues, Live for Clubs upload problems, Braintree transactions, unsent notifications, and TRAX errors; club result database connection timeouts (which resulted in the my.acbl.org/club-results page being inaccessible); reprocessing BBO games that were incorrectly set up; correcting development on login redirect issues; and club alliances and pooling enhancement requests.

In support of the ACBL's cashless initiative, the IT Department configured and boxed 145 computer tablets and Square readers (part of the mobile applications, websites, software, cloud-based solutions, hardware, and other products and services offered by Square, Inc. and its subsidiaries) for shipment to Austin, TX for use at the 2021 Fall NABC.

We have been supporting the return to in-person play by bringing Tournament Directors back into the ACBL domain and providing new hardware purchases and configuration or updates to existing devices.

### ***Business Intelligence***

#### DATA WAREHOUSE

The IT Department has added many new data tables to its Data Warehouse to support advanced reporting and record auditing. In order to support MyACBL and the Live for Clubs applications, the IT Department built a pipeline to move data on the AS400 out to the AWS

platform. Following the new platform design, we have developed the database to support the new preregistration application and the processing to keep it updated from the existing TRAX application. We have implemented the data and processing that will allow the Bridge Operations team to manage club activity (playing, pooling, and alliances) to determine a daily allowed list of members (and, subsequently, visitors) for each club. (See also Report Migration below.)

#### ANALYTICS/VISUALIZATIONS

As reported in July, working with the Field Operations team, the IT Department developed Tableau workbooks for reporting on the daily NAP club games and publishing the list of qualifiers. We are currently working on dashboards and reports to support the GNT club games. We are also developing the dashboards and operational reports to support the upcoming release of the preregistration application. These reports will provide valuable insights to our Tournament Directors and the Bridge Operations team to both predict and manage upcoming tournament participation.

#### REPORT MIGRATION

The IT Department continues its monumental efforts to migrate the ACBL's reporting from the old AS400 platform. The monthly "In and Out" report (membership gains and losses) has been reproduced inside of the Data Warehouse and will soon be delivered monthly from that new platform to each Unit. The daily reporting of each club's Include List (their allowed player list) and visitors list is in progress and will be fully migrated to Bridge Operations by the end of November. (See also Data Warehouse above.)

### ***Infrastructure Projects & Support***

#### TELEPHONY CLOUD

The unified communications/telephony solution with Microsoft Teams was implemented successfully on July 22, only one week after its proposed rollout date. Online training was sent out to the telephony users and support was provided for daily operations. The call center agent software was implemented and is currently partially in use. We will be working with the Club and Membership team to determine the most effective timing and processes to roll the agent routing and reporting components to that staff.

#### MICROSOFT TEAMS

The IT Department fully implemented Microsoft Teams and One Drive into the ACBL backend processes. The majority of ACBL's data was moved into One Drive and SharePoint (with hooks into Microsoft Teams for departmentally referenced data). Microsoft Teams (with telephony) is now the main platform for the ACBL's internal communications. The project was finalized on July 23.

#### SUPPORTING BOD/BOG ONLINE MEETINGS

As previously reported, the IT Department continued to support the Board of Directors with its successful online meetings, requests for individual help, and setup of new Board members on their email, laptops, etc. We are working with the Administrative Coordinator, Sabrina Goley, to determine the best and most efficient methods of supporting Board meetings, including the collation of necessary documents and the voting process. The solution may involve implementing new software or streamlining and perfecting current practices.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

The IT Department continued performing weekly maintenance and monthly operating system and cyber security updates and working collaboratively with the IT Development team in support of production and infrastructure related issues.

## IT SERVICE DESK

The IT Department continued to provide direct support to ACBL employees, the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council and, occasionally, ACBL members. The preparation for return to in-person play, the Fall NABC, and the return of employees to headquarters, along with substantial employee turnover, has strained Service Desk operations but, overall, the IT Department has been successful in managing support issues.

# ***Marketing***

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## **Digital Marketing Efforts**

### ACBL WEBSITE

The website redesign launched September 1 and included a full content audit, rebranding, WordPress template upgrade, and other site improvements. The Marketing Department is continuing to work with the IT Department to create and prioritize ongoing site improvements for Phase II development.

With the restructuring of the website, our metrics and page views remain strong but have seen expected changes. Over the last 30 days we have had over 496,000 sessions, with 615,000 page views. Our bounce rate (the percentage of visitors to a particular website who navigate away from the site after viewing only one page) is at a very low 16.2%, which indicates that people are engaging and finding what they are looking for on the website. We had over 16,000 searches, with the top five being Convention Card, ACBL, ACBLscore, STaC, and NAP. Top search clicks are Club Corner, Just Play Bridge, Document Library, Home, and Play Bridge. Our top five pages are Just Play Bridge (with 200,000 page views), Home, Play Bridge, Upcoming Events, and Learn. This aligns with our strategy behind restructuring the Learn pages. The overall design of the new site allows for direct navigation to “Just Play Bridge”, allowing us to focus on maximizing the effectiveness of the “Learn to Play Bridge” page and continue to improve and refine the page with updated content. Looking at our Realtime data, the top five pages are Just Play Bridge, Home, Play Bridge, Austin NABC, and Tricks and Treats Online Regional.

### EMAIL MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

As of October 27, 2021, approximately 370 separate email campaigns targeting various member segments have been sent during 2021, an additional 165 emails since last reported at the end of June. We continued the repeating campaigns, including the ACBL Speakeasy, Retro It's Your Call games, College Bridge Online tournament updates, Club Manager Roundtable and Teacher Roundtable reminders, and the announcements of the availability of new online Bridge Bulletins to Juniors and Guest Members. Other featured emails included promotional NABC emails and COVID-19-related topics.

During the third quarter 2021, the email open rate was 42% and the click-through rate was 4%, both of which are well above the averages for the leisure industry (17.7% and 2%, respectively). However, moving forward, the reported open rate will be less reliable due to the change in the latest Apple iPhone operating system. This change marks all emails as ‘read’ if the recipient is using the Apple Mail app as a way to improve the user’s privacy. The click-through rate will continue to be reliable and will likely become the standard measure for the email marketing industry.

We are currently investigating new email templates to support the ACBL rebranding. The new templates will draw upon the latest visual and structural trends of the industry.

A new procedure was implemented for Sectionals at Sea emails. Whereas previously promotional emails for Sectionals at Sea were limited to a set radius around the port city, now the upcoming Sectionals at Sea are collected into a single email and sent to the entire membership. Response from the individual tournaments has been positive.

We have increased utilization of email automation through our email service provider, Mail Chimp, which has streamlined the process for recurring emails for audiences like ACBL Intro to Bridge students and Guest Members. We aim to further utilize this technology.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

As of November 2021, the ACBL **Facebook** page has 11,204 followers, a 9.0% increase from June. Recent posts that received high reach and engagement include the It’s Your Call hands. As of November 2021, our **Twitter** account increased to 3,630 followers, gaining more than 600 new followers for an increase of 18%. We have continued to grow the ACBL’s **Instagram** page. The use of hashtags (such as #playbridge, #bridge, or #cardgame) continues to be refined. As of November 2021, ACBL’s **Instagram** account has 1,769 followers, a 9.9% increase since June.

#### **Public Relations**

Memphis firm Obsidian Public Relations continued to assist with several campaigns, including the ACBL brand refresh, the new website, social media, ACBL Intro to Bridge, and media relations. The ACBL brand refresh and website launch press release was distributed to news release outlets in September.

Based on feedback from the monthly Teacher Roundtable as well as from Units/Districts, we are developing instructional materials and an agency-led webinar on **Facebook** ad creation and deployment. The webinar is scheduled for November 15 and will be promoted to all teachers, club managers, Units, and Districts. The webinar recording and instructional materials will be available on the acbl.org website.

Fall NABC communication and safety protocols were drafted and communicated to staff, Board members, and the general membership. A digital instructional video was created to help with vaccination registration by third party vendor VOW. Supportive Frequently Asked Questions landing page content (containing COVID-19 protocols) was prepared and deployed to all membership. Crisis response statements and general tournament talking points have been developed for situational deployment. Based on the current landscape, we determined that our public relations focus for the Fall NABC would be after the event. Post-event materials

have been created to share with media outlets and will include tournament results, attendance numbers, and positive news of the event's process after it has concluded.

The ACBL Intro to Bridge **Facebook** ads have been updated. These ads will target lookalike audiences and include new messaging and graphics. The ads will begin running the week of November 8 to promote first quarter classes that begin in January and February 2022. (See Bridge Education—ACBL Intro to Bridge below.)

Following are links to articles about bridge in the media:

NY Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/26/arts/contract-bridge-cheating.html>

New Yorker: <https://www.newyorker.com/sports/sporting-scene/the-great-bridge-boycott>

We continue to monitor and follow up with local and national media opportunities.

### ***Creative Services***

Rebranding was completed on the website, and the updated brand guide was distributed internally and externally to key stakeholders. The brand guide and logo suite can be found on the [website here](#). Email templates and digital style templates are being implemented cross-functionally with the IT Department on current and new development projects. Digital templates for PowerPoint presentations and a letterhead were distributed internally for corporate use. Printed letterhead and certificates have been redesigned and are being ordered when stock quantities are depleted.

The week-long Member Appreciation Event was held in October. It focused on the ACBL's new brand elements and awarded prizes that reflect the new branding and creative direction. (See Member Appreciation Promotion below.)

The new branding will be executed and deployed on NABC signage, collateral material, and gift cards (to support cashless transition from Bridge Bucks) in time for the Fall NABC. New business cards, name tags, and personal protective equipment for staff, Tournament Directors and Board members are also in place for the Fall NABC.

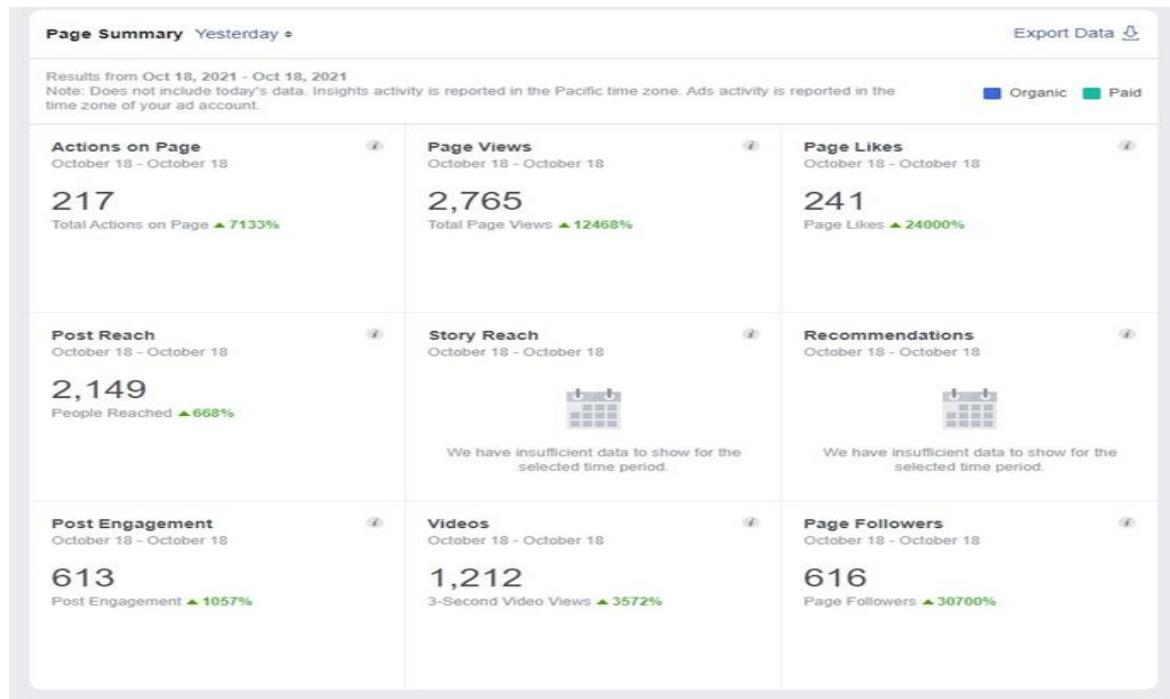
Additional collateral material is slated for updating and redesign in 2022.

### ***Guest Membership Program***

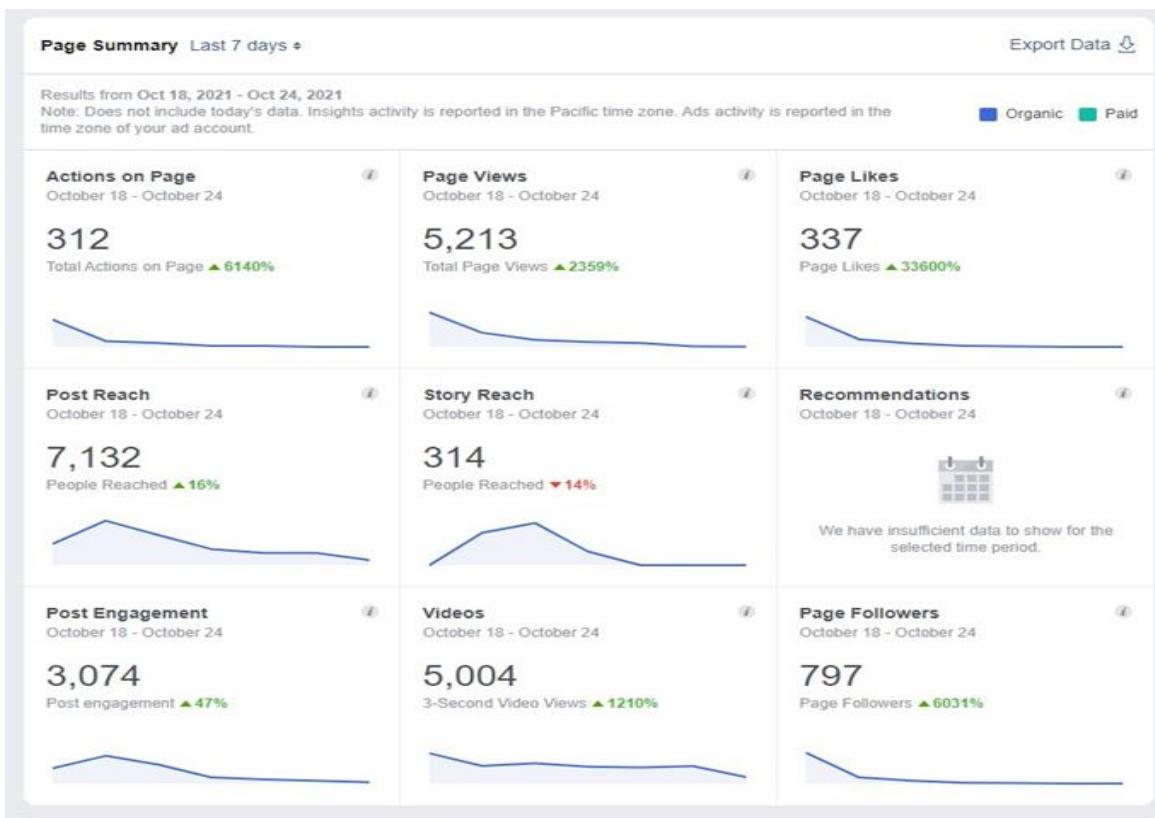
We continue to promote and grow Guest Memberships with over 2,500 Guest Members coming through the program. We currently have 573 active Guest Members and have successfully converted 857 Guest Members to full membership. We advertised Guest Memberships again with BBO in late October, prior to the NABC Robot Individual. That game typically provides a spike in Guest Member enrollment. In addition, during the last two classes of the ACBL Intro to Bridge program, we encourage students to enroll as Guest Members. We anticipate numbers to increase again due to these promotions in November and December.

## **Member Appreciation Promotion**

Our first Member Appreciation Event promotion ran the week of October 18-22. We saw incredible engagement from members and had amazing results on our social media channels. The first day of the promotion we had 9,700 entries from over 4,800 users. This equated to a 12,486% increase in our **Facebook** page views and a 30,700% increase in our **Facebook** page followers.



Over the full week of the promotion, we had 17,100 entries and 5,700 users. Overall, for the week we had a 2,359% increase in our **Facebook** page views and a 6,031% increase in our **Facebook** page followers. Our Facebook page follows increased from 10,250 pre-promotion to over 11,690, an almost 1,500 or 14% increase in page followers.



160 ACBL members will receive prizes that began shipping the week of November 1. We will continue to do member appreciation events in 2022.

## **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 they renew their membership during years two and three. Year-to-date we have sent out \$15,400 in recruiter bonuses to club managers and teachers and anticipate sending another \$7,000 for third quarter bonuses.

## **Cooperative Advertising Program**

2021 year-to-date, we have reimbursed \$6,900 in Cooperative Advertising Program reimbursements. This is still much less than what would be reimbursed in a non-pandemic year, and it is due to the lack of face-to-face teaching programs and club games. We are seeing an increase in ad approvals as clubs have started to reopen, and we expect a steady increase through the end of the year.

## **Alzheimer's Association Partnership**

During 2021, about 300 Units and clubs raised \$917,000 for the Alzheimer's Association's The Longest Day® fundraiser. All Virtual Club Games held the weekend of June 19 and 20 were considered Alzheimer's Association games, and the ACBL sanction fees were donated to the Alzheimer's Association. Clubs that had returned to face-to-face play were able to choose a day during the week of June 20-27 to hold their events and offer upgraded games. To date, the ACBL has raised \$7.8 million for Alzheimer's patient care and research of this debilitating disease.

## ***Bridge Education***

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### ***ACBL Intro to Bridge***

Following the first round of Intro to Bridge online courses that began in June and July 2021, another round started in September and October. Three teachers in addition to Patty Tucker (the creator of course content) have been trained to teach the 10-week course and, year-to-date, 20 courses including the pilot have been taken by over 880 students. We exceeded our original goal of 10 courses and 500 students by over 75%. Ten courses are currently scheduled to begin in January and February 2022, and additional rounds will be offered quarterly. (See also Public Relations above.)

Toward the end of each course, students are encouraged to sign up as Guest Members and are given access to a private **Facebook** group exclusive to graduates of the program. (See also Guest Membership Program above.) Students use this group to ask bridge questions and connect with other graduates to schedule bridge games.

By the end of the course, students should feel comfortable playing in a 0-5 masterpoint game and/or receiving further instruction from local or online bridge teachers. They are encouraged to find teachers in their geographical area using the Find-a-Teacher search or to connect with one of the teachers in the online teacher list to continue their bridge journey.

When surveyed after the class, 86% of respondents strongly agree that they would recommend the course to their friends and family, 52% definitely plan to take more lessons, and 38% indicated that they probably will take more lessons. Over 72% prefer online lessons over in-person classes.

### ***Online Teacher Certification Program***

Year-to-date, 101 teachers have taken the ACBL Online Teacher Certification Workshop, a highly interactive online workshop that stresses limiting “teacher talking” time in favor of active student participation. Fifty-six bridge teachers earned the certification in 2021. Since the program launched in August 2020, a total of 205 teachers have completed the workshop, and 125 have earned the certification. This workshop focuses on training bridge teachers on how to use online tools in the most effective and engaging way to teach bridge online as well as teaching best practices that will apply when face-to-face classes resume. The workshop is currently being offered quarterly.

ACBL management considers this program of recurring workshops and certifications, supplemented by a monthly Teacher Roundtable, a success.

## **School Bridge Program**

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

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

During 2021, we have had two school bridge material orders for a total of 32 students, but there have been a few programs offering virtual lessons for larger groups who have also received teaching stipends. The ACBL Educational Foundation is funding an online Youth bridge program, BridgeWhiz, targeting children in grades 4 through 12 that we hope will translate into more school bridge participants in the future.

## **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. The pandemic caused the program to take a big hit. However, some clubs/teams have bounced back. There are around 20 currently active programs that we are supporting, but we are still down from a peak of 50 college bridge clubs pre-pandemic.

Since the College Bridge Online (CBO) Club, sponsored by BBO in partnership with the ACBL, began in October 2017, CBO members have logged over 118,000 individual entries, 982,000 boards, and almost 13 million tricks in bimonthly special tournaments with masterpoint prizes.

In July, the ACBL hosted an online bridge event for college students that took the place of the Bridge Bowl. It featured both pair and team games. Attendance was low with only six pairs and four teams participating. The Bridge Bowl will return during the 2021 Summer NABC.

## **2021 Youth NABC**

The next in-person Youth NABC will be held during the summer 2022 in Providence. As in 2020, we hosted a Virtual Youth NABC in July 2021 featuring both pair games and cardrook games on BBO. Games were free for participants and approximately 80 kids participated.

## **Lifelong Learning**

The ACBL is an officially recognized Osher Lifelong Learning Institute curriculum resource, but we also support bridge through several other unassociated lifelong learning programs. Though face-to-face continuing education declined during the coronavirus pandemic, we did support 10 programs during the 2021 fall semester. Half the courses were online, and half were face-to-face.

## ***Editorial***

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The editorial team welcomed Lisa Jackson back as the Senior Graphic Designer for the Bridge Bulletin during July. Lisa had previously worked for the ACBL from 1992 through 2006. She took over as the graphic designer when Picante Creative, the outside firm hired to replace long-term designer Cindy Hill when she retired in 2020, ended their services. Lisa is extremely experienced in the graphic design field, and she has been an excellent fit.

The Bulletin's 2022 editorial budget for printing and postage/freight has been augmented to handle price increases in both areas. Although mild increases are normal year-to-year, paper, ink, and freight all experienced price surges during the past few months. In addition, labor shortages and supply-chain issues have significantly impacted the ACBL's printer, Quad Graphics, which in turn have led to interruptions in the timely delivery of the Bridge Bulletin. This late delivery issue may take a few months to be satisfactorily resolved.

## ***Office of National Recorder***

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The pace of Player Memos, almost all of them involving unethical behavior, have attenuated a bit, probably due to increased face-to-face play. To assist in investigating Player Memos, we currently have 15 volunteers. Charging Party Advocates are Ryan Connors (D6), Michael Hargreaves (D19), David Sizemore (D22) and David Pearlman (D17). While not required, given the stakes involved in ethical matters, we would prefer to have attorneys fill these openings. Advisors to the Online Ethical Oversight Committee are Ray Yuenger (D21) and Marilyn Greenberg (D3). Thanks to the additions to the Office of National Recorder, we are gradually getting caught up. One thing that has been holding us up is BBO archiving hand records over eight months old. BBO is addressing this problem.

We are currently searching for an Assistant National Recorder (see Human Resources–Staffing–Open Positions above).

ACBL continues to transition back to face-to-face bridge. Online bridge isn't going away and the Office of National Recorder expects to see the trend of ethics-related Player Memos continuing, albeit to a lesser extent post-pandemic. Ethics-related Player Memos are more time-intensive in investigation and adjudication. Per the Code of Disciplinary Regulations, serious ethical matters are handled by the Office of National Recorder. However, as live games get active, so will our District disciplinary machinery. We will be seeking help in initial investigations of some of the online activity in Virtual Clubs from District Recorders.

PLAYER MEMO REPORT AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2021														
	2018 Spring	2018 Summer	2018 Fall	2018 NABC	2018 Non-NABC	2018 TOTAL	2019 Spring	2019 Summer	2019 Fall	2019 NABC	2019 Non-NABC	2019 Total	2020 Total	2021 YTD Total
<b>Total Player Memos Reported*</b>	41	40	32	212	325	38	34	22	184	278	1091	732		
Conduct	13	15	14	92	134	8	12	8	59	87	62	38		
Bridge Related	17	14	9	37	77	17	19	7	56	99	410	246		
Ethics	7	11	10	84	112	18	8	7	84	117	571	324		
Other	6	0	2	8	16	2	1	0	13	16	72	44		
<b>Number of Player Memos Handled By:</b>														
Unit Recorder	N/A	N/A	N/A	55	55	N/A	N/A	N/A	36	36	N/A	N/A		
PM resulted in Charges brought by Unit	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	7	N/A	N/A		
District Recorder	N/A	N/A	N/A	86	86	N/A	N/A	N/A	78	78	25	2		
PM resulted in Charges brought by District	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	6	5	0		
National Recorder	41	40	32	53	166	38	34	22	51	145	1002	654		
PM resulted in Charges brought by Mgr	0	4	0	2	6	2	1	0	12	15	50	19		
PM resulted in Charges brought by DIC	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	2	N/A	N/A		
Other (Filed or Club Matter)	N/A	N/A	N/A	18	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	19	64	76		
<b>Player Memo Sent to ACC</b>	2	6	2	17	27	5	3	6	21	35	12	0		
<b>Key:</b>														
PM = Player Memo														
* Player Memos reported may fall into more than one category														

DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2021						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Appeals and Charges Committee</b>	13	8	7	8	22	18
Automatic Review	6	5	2	3	7	8
Automatic Review and Appeal	2	0	0	1	0	0
Appeal	3	2	2	0	0	0
Request for CDR 9.2 Hearing	2	1	0	1	0	0
Negotiated Resolution	0	0	1	1	15	10
Request for Readmission	0	0	1	2	0	0
Violation of Discipline	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>National Committees</b>	5	10	10	9	12	7
ACBL Disciplinary Committee	1	5	6 <sup>(a)</sup>	4 <sup>(b)</sup>	2	1
ACBL Management	0	4	4	0	1	1
Ethical Oversight Committee	3	0	0	3	1	0
NABC Tournament Conduct Committee	1	1	0	2	0	0
Online Ethical Oversight Committee	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	5
<b>District Appellate Committee</b>	6	0	1	1	1	0
<b>District Disciplinary Committee</b>	20	11	20	16	6	0
Unit Disciplinary Committee	16	8	14 <sup>(c)</sup>	8 <sup>(d)</sup>	1	N/A
District Disciplinary Committee	4	2	5	8	5 <sup>(e)</sup>	0
Tournament Disciplinary Committee	0	1	1	0	N/A	0
<b>Endnotes:</b>						
(a) Three were resolved by Negotiated Resolutions.						
(b) (2) Negotiated Resolution, (1) Review of Recommended Additional Discipline, (1) Standard Hearing						
(c) Two hearings were appeals of club barrings.						
(d) One hearing was appeal of club barring.						
(e) One resolved by Negotiated Resolution.						
<b>Cases in progress (Charge Letters, Notice of Hearing and/or Appeal Received):</b>						
ACBL Disciplinary Committee	0					
Appeals and Charges	1	Negotiated Resolution				
Online Ethical Oversight Committee	3					
<b>Recorder Complaints</b>	20					

#### Other Notes

The anomaly in the number of matters handled by Appeals & Charges relates to the delegation of ethics-related Negotiated Resolutions to that committee, rather than the body that would have heard the matter.

The Pending Recorder Complaints does not include those Recorder Complaints which are in the preparation process.