

**MINUTES OF ACBL DISTRICT 4 BOARD MEETING**  
**Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, King of Prussia, PA**  
**June 28, 2019**

Voting Member Attendees:

At-Large: Meyer Kotkin (President), Dave Kresge (Vice-President), Dan Boye (IPP), Joann Glasson (District Director), Mary Miller (Pres. Appointee), Tom Weik (6 of 6).

Unit 112: Lynn Ackerman, James Carroll, Jerry Manioci, Betty Youmans (4 of 6)

Unit 120: Bill Orth (Unit President), Bill Burns (2 of 2)

Unit 121: No representatives (0 of 2)

Unit 133: Jim Kenny (Unit Pres.), Betsy Cutler, (2 of 2)

Unit 141: Howard Kahlenberg (Unit Pres.) John Dickenson, Tom Purl, Bob Glasson, Pat Civale, Wendy DeChaderevian, Elaine Weintraub, Janet Johnson, Joan Goldstein, Bill Goldstein (10 of 13)

Unit 168: Linda Ivanoff, Tom Coxey, Jeanne Gehret (3 of 5)

Unit 190: Melody Henderson (for Harold Jordan, Unit Pres.), Mark Henderson, Ala Hamilton-Day, Karen Pollak (4 of 4)

Unit 217: No representatives (0 of 2)

Also Present:

Marilyn Wells, ACBL Area Manager (of Tournaments & ACBL Directors)

Melody Henderson, Delaware Regional Co-Chair

Bill Bauer, D4 Board Secretary

Jay Whipple, D9 district Director, 2018 ACBL Board President

Josh Kotkin, Duplicator of Boards extraordinaire

Sue Purl. Wife of Tom Purl (who was recognized for his service to the Tournament)

John McAllister (invited by Jerry Manioci to talk about his movie promoting the game)

Excused:

Pat Stadelmaier, Unit 112 President

A meeting of the ACBL District 4 Board of Directors was held at the Doubletree by Hilton, King of Prussia, PA on June 28, 2019. Meyer Kotkin, President, called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM, a quorum being present (31 of 42 voting members representing 6 of 8 units).

Meyer called on the Secretary to recognize Board members attending their first Board meeting. Bill noted the following new members and substitutes in attendance:

Unit 120: Fran Hoffer who left early and was replaced by Bill Burns

Unit 141: Joan & Bill Goldstein, Janet Johnson

Meyer then recognized Tom Purl, Assistant Tournament Director, for all of his service to the District and its Units. Meyer presented a bouquet of flowers from U141 to Tom's wife Sue. Tom & Sue are relocating to Colorado where Tom has a new job. Meyer continued by saying that he is personally indebted to Tom (and also to Marc Labowitz) for helping him to learn so many of the aspects of running a tournament. For this, Meyer

extended his heartfelt thanks. The attendees also gave Tom a hearty round of applause. Meyer also volunteered Tom's services to any of our tournaments willing to fly him back from Colorado.

Meyer next recognized Jay Whipple, D9 District Director and 2018 ACBL Board President who was attending the tournament Meyer enumerated just a few of Jay's services to the game of bridge which includes:

1. Developing a McKinney standings list of players at a specific club.
2. Programming an on-line partnership desk for tournaments.
3. Conceiving and implementing The Common Game to enable clubs around the country to play the same hands and for players to see their results compared to all the other participants.
4. Founding "Fast Results" which evolved into ACBL live.

### **DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Joann Glasson requested that members read her report on the District website.

Joann then turned over the meeting to Jay Whipple, D9 District Director and 2018 ACBL Board President and present Chairman of the ACBL Board of Directors, for his remarks.

Jay remarked that as a 6-year Board Member and as ACBL Board President, he advocated two objectives:

1. Make the game more fun
2. Increase the membership

The reason for emphasis on these two objectives is: Bridge is dying!

Jay also promoted the REACH (Regional @ Clubs) which benefits the ACBL Education Foundation. A REACH is a week-long Regional event played at clubs, the next one being July 29 – August 3. During the last REACH, clubs noticed a 30% to 50% increase in attendance. So this is a way for the ACBL to give back to clubs. The REACH is run like a side series with a player's two best percentage games being averaged to be that player's score. The last winner received 30 masterpoints. Section awards are being added for the upcoming REACH.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOV. 2, 2018**

The minutes of the Lancaster Board meeting of November 2, 2018 were unanimously approved. Bill reminded the Board that the minutes appear on the District website.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Pat Civale noted that she had placed her report for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2019 on each table. She then reported that the May 31, 2019 balance sheet reflects a \$168K cash balance (including \$112.8K in the Nationals Account). There is \$45K of outstanding advances to Tournament Committees included in the total assets.

The fiscal 2019 P&L statement shows a District loss of \$4,350. The 2018 Valley Forge Regional produced an \$8.5K profit. The Syracuse Tournament had a profit of \$4.7K.

Lancaster 2108 yielded a \$4.2K profit. The financial details for each of these tournaments for the past 3 years are included as part of the Treasurer's report.

Lastly, Pat reported that she is now bonded (a bylaws requirement brought to her attention by the Secretary).

The Board approved the Treasurer's report unanimously.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Meyer addressed the matter of the STaC sanction fee with a 2-page report on finances. The ACBL has lowered the sanction fee to the STaC sponsor. In return, the sponsor can reduce the sanction fee charged to clubs down to \$6/table from the current \$7. Meyer recommended the continuation of the \$7/table sanction fee with units free to rebate \$1/table to their participating clubs from the unit's share of the profits if a unit so chooses. With the fee at \$7, all units are making a greater profit with the District sponsoring all STaCs than when individual units, or groups of units, ran the STaCs.

Meyer reported on our District's good working relationship with the American ridge Association (ABA). Meyer and Mar Labowitz played in a recent ABA event as did Karen Pollock and Carolyn Hughes and all were well-received. D4 supplies our tables to the ABA with the ABA paying the transportation cost.

### **RATIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION**

Meyer requested the Board's affirmation of the following Executive Committee resolution adopted since the 2018 Lancaster board meeting as follows:

Resolved: D4 will subsidize 2<sup>nd</sup> place GNT Teams in Flights "B" & "C" \$1,200 for the first two days of play and an additional \$400 per day thereafter as long as the team remains in the GNT competition. Note: Only if there are 8+ teams in flight "B" and/or "C", will the ACBL allow a second team to advance to the NABC event and therefore be eligible for the D4 subsidy.

The motion to affirm the Executive Committee resolution carried unanimously.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **PUBLICITY**

Joann Glasson had no report.

#### **DISTRICT 4SPOT**

New editor, Janet Johnson, thanked contributors for their submissions. Janet welcomes suggestions. Janet noted that Meyer's entertaining and erudite column is a must-read.

#### **TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR**

Meyer led off by noting that the Delaware Unit will hold Sectionals in Wilmington and Rehoboth Beach just two weeks apart in September. The Rehoboth Beach Sectional had

been planned and sanctioned for July, but the playing venue was lost. Without telling the District Tournament Coordinator, the Rehoboth Beach tournament committee booked a location for September, two weeks after the Wilmington Sectional. Then, the committee went about requesting a sanction. Meyer and Elaine Weintraub's inclination was not to approve the new sanction request; however Meyer met with the Rehoboth Beach volunteers who made an impassioned plea for approval. Meyer made the tough call to allow the re-scheduled tournament despite the scheduling issue.

Meyer emphasized to the Rehoboth Beach Tournament committee and to the District Board that tournament committees that lose venues must request and obtain approval for a new sanction before booking a new venue.

Elaine noted that we are slowly and painfully moving in the direction of having fewer tournaments. The Philadelphia Unit reduced their number of Sectionals from five to three. Perhaps fewer tournaments were a factor that resulted in increased attendance at the January and March 2019 Sectionals.

### **CHARITY**

Mary Miller agreed to assume the role of Charity Chairperson at Meyer's request. Mary reported on her club's raising \$4,000 for the Longest Day Alzheimer's Association event on June 21. Mary accepted donations (checks for \$10 or more payable to the Alzheimer's Association) in lieu of card fees. The host church did not charge rent.

### **FINANCE**

Dave Kresge had no report.

### **NAP**

Qualifying games at clubs start, as usual, in June and continue through August. John will again be signing up clubs to run District finals in Flight C with the caveat they need to attract at least 5 tables. District Finals for Flight A will be in North Wales, PA, October 5/6. Flight C will be October 5 at clubs throughout the District. Flight B will be held at two sites on October 12<sup>th</sup> – Southern site is North Wales and Northern site is at the sectional in Johnson City, NY.

So far, clubs in Ocean View DE, Vestal NY, Fairport NY, and Camp Hill PA have accepted my invitation to hold a Flight C final. Waiting to hear from King of Prussia PA, Langhorne PA, Wilmington DE, Taylor PA, and Northfield NJ. Any other club who wishes to hold the two session Flight C final is welcome to participate as long as they feel they can draw the 5 table minimum.

Card fees for Flights A and B will remain at last year's rate - \$15 per player per session. Clubs holding Flight C finals may set their own fee structure and provide refreshments as they see fit. \$10 per table per session will be due D4 to partially cover ACBL sanction fees, subsidies to winners, and DIC fee. Again, same rates as last year.

Issues to be resolved:

1. Review of CoC for both GNT and NAP which are out of date in light of D22 debacle.
2. Find venue which can accommodate our “new normal” participation without hurting attendance.

**GNT**

The District finals for GNT A and C were held 4/13 and 4/14/2019 at North Penn Duplicate Bridge Club in North Wales, PA. Open Flight and Flight B were held at the same venue on 5/4 and 5/5/2019.

Attendance was sharply higher for Flight A and sharply lower for Flight C over the prior year. The following table summarizes GNT participation for the years 2016 to present:

Year	Venue	Open	A	B	C	Total
2016	Wilkes Barre	5	4	10	4	23
2017	King of Prussia	6	6	11	11	34
2018	King of Prussia	7	6	8	7	28
2019	North Wales	8	11	10	4	33

Looking at the data, John reported on his three observations:

- 1) A surge in attendance since moving from NE PA to nearer where many bridge players live; attendance the last 3 years has averaged 39% higher than baseline. The increase is most welcome given generally declining attendance at tournaments ACBL-wide.
- 2) A surge in Flight C attendance the first year we held finals in Greater Philadelphia followed by a decline to baseline – despite the carrot introduced this year of a second team getting a Q if 8 or more enter.
- 3) A surge this year in Flight A attendance, for reasons John can’t explain.

There is an issue in Flight C where there is a great disparity in skill between younger players who meet the criteria for entry having only played a few years and older players who are still non-LM and under 500 points after many years of playing. This is discouraging for the older players.

With the surge in attendance we have nearly outgrown Valley Forge Bridge club (20 table capacity) and North Penn Duplicate Bridge club (21 table capacity). The 18 tables we had for Open/B weekend made for a rather uncomfortable tight fit in the 21 table NPDBC on the first day. John is looking for a larger venue for next year’s District finals. The D4 Conditions of Contest are in need of updating. In particular there is reference to the old General Chart and Mid Chart conventions, and there is no need to address

conventions allowed in our District CoC whatsoever as that is covered in the National CoC. John would like to convene a committee to look at best practice in other Districts and update our CoC before the deadline which is December 2019. The goal would be to have the new conditions ready for approval at the Manheim board meeting.

## **EDUCATION**

Jerry Manioci introduced John McAllister who has created an 86-minute documentary movie, “Double Dummy”, as a means to introduce people of all ages to bridge. While it features several youths whom are competing internationally with players their own age, its attraction is more universal, as it shows elders being provided a social activity that keeps them sharp and is fun as well.

John wants units and districts to arrange screenings in theaters particularly on Wednesday, Oct. 1 which he refers to as “introduce one new player to bridge day”.

John later informed me of the following:

1. He has a partnership with Tugg, Inc. Tugg allows “promoters” to reserve a theater “using a widget: <https://www.tugg.com/titles/double-dummy> and click on “Host a Screening.”)
2. He intends for bridge players to take non-bridge players to a theater showing to watch the film and then be given information on teachers and clubs.
3. The following Bridgewinners post explains the benefit that such a screening may have: <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/highly-recommend-attending-a-screening-of-double-dummy/>
4. There is a link where Board members may view the film: <https://vimeo.com/314883499>. There will be a sign “THIS VIDEO IS PRIVATE” and a box to enter the password. Password: DDPa\$050219
5. Scheduling a Learn Bridge in a Day event would be an excellent way to capitalize on the enthusiasm and interest that comes from a successful screening.
6. Samantha Punch hosted a screening at Stirling University in Scotland, worked hard to sell out the theater, and now they have a university bridge club as a result.
7. Similarly, in Beaverton, OR, we held a screening and a number of young male social players decided they were more interested in attending duplicate games and tournaments as a result of having seen Double Dummy.

Jerry is contacting youth bridge camps and colleges to arrange showings.

## **INTERMEDIATE/NEWCOMER**

Ala Hamilton-Day noted that the I/N tournaments are going “gang busters”. But it is still hard to get players to move out of their comfort zone when they no longer are I/N’s.

## **TOURNAMENT**

Meyer announced that Allison Brandt, Tournament committee Chair as well as a Board of Governors representative is moving to Florida along with Mike Giesler. Meyer noted all of the work that the pair performed for the Philadelphia Unit and District 4.

During the meeting, Meyer advised tournament committees and the Board that he has a District Property Book having an inventory of District-owned property.

Meyer previously addressed the issue of the D4 STaC fee (see President’s Report above).

Five Units indicated that they will make a proposal to host an NLM Regional at the Manheim (Lancaster) Board Meeting. These Units are 112, 120, 133, 141 and 168. Betsy Cutler of Unit 133 passed out a 1-page proposal summary. Linda Ivanoff of Unit 168 and Ed Scanlon (not present) have completed a proposal which they will share when the other proposals are also presented in Manheim. Linda also called attention to reduced rewards (33%) for NLM Regionals.

Marilyn Wells, ACBL’s Area Coordinator, said that the NLM Regionals are typically 4 or 5 days and are usually held in conjunction with an open Sectional Tournament. A district may hold up to three NLM Regionals per year.

### **AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DISTRICT – CLUB COOPERATION**

Mary Miller presented a request from Ellen Silverman on behalf of Yorktown Bridge Club in Jenkintown, PA of which she is a co-owner. Ellen requests a \$100/student subsidy for up to 20 first-time students ages 20-35 to attend a Bridge Basics I lesson series to be held at Yorktown BC. Mary noted that Yorktown holds two weekly 0-50 games for newer players. In return, the District will receive a report including how the students were recruited, the number who started the class, the number who “graduated”, number becoming ACBL members and number participating in the club 0-50 games.

The request was approved with one against and one abstention.

### **TOURNAMENT REPORTS:**

- Valley Forge** (6/24 – 6/30/19) - Meyer Kotkin reported that the table count was up through Thursday from 922 to 1,059. One factor is that there was no Spring NABC in Philadelphia this year. This will be the last year at the Doubletree by Hilton as the two-floors of play connected by a lift for the handicapped are cumbersome.
- (6/22 – 6/28/20) - Meyer thanked Bob Glasson for negotiating a contract with the Valley Forge Casino and Resort. This site provides 1-room playing space that is clean and well-lit. Lunch will cost the tournament \$1.00 more than at the Doubletree this year. There is complimentary valet service.
- Lancaster** (10/29 – 11/4/18) - Jeanne Gehret reported that attendance was up 2% even though attendance was down 10% on Wednesday likely due to the ACBL-Wide Instant Match Point Game played at clubs.
- (10/28 – 11/3/19) - The Charlotte Regional is now running concurrently. It could divert some pro players and their clients away from Lancaster. This year, the schedule of events includes a barometer pairs on Wednesday, a Dupli-Swiss on Sunday and one guaranteed two-sessions K/O T/4.

**Rochester (split)** - Mary Miller reported that the date is set for the 2021 Regional.  
(8/5 – 8/11/19) Mary thanked Elaine Weintraub for her assistance in working with Montreal and the ACBL to secure the 2021 dates.

**Syracuse** - Mary Miller reported that she has scheduled the dates.  
(8/10 – 8/16/20)

**Delaware** - Mark Henderson reported that he has secured a new venue,  
(3/30 - 4/5/20) the Doubletree on Rt. 202. There will be free lunches from Tuesday – Sunday. There are two sponsors. DLS Discovery will provide free printing and banner, flyers plus \$2,100 in audio-visual equipment. Rusty Krauss will provide \$1,000 to \$2,000. Dupli-Swiss Thursday and Sunday.

**Wilkes-Barre (split)** - Bill Orth said the tournament will still be held at the  
(8/5 – 8/11/19) Woodlands. First time this Regional is held in the summer.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There were two items on the agenda relating to the District bylaws as follows:

1. The Secretary presented re-codified bylaws sent to Board members with the agenda. The re-codified bylaws incorporate the November 2014 Board-adopted amendment eliminating the position of Second Vice-President. Also some Committee names were changed to agree with current ACBL terminology.
2. An amendment prepared by Meyer Kotkin, also sent to Board members with the agenda, to align the District President's term of office with that of the District Director's 3-year term.

Both the re-codified bylaws and the amendment were adopted unanimously.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The Board will meet Friday evening, November 1, 2019 during the Lancaster Regional to be held at Spooky Nook in Manheim.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meyer said that he was glad to see Tom Weik back. Meyer also noted the passing of former District Board President, nice-guy, Don McLean. Meyer also noted the passing of Betty McLean a few months prior to Don. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Bauer  
District 4 Secretary  
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