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From: D25 Director <ddirector@nebridge.org>
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To: Mike
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DISTRICT DIRECTOR REPORT END 2020

ACBL UPDATE

Happy New Year Mike

I hope this finds you and your family well and that you are staying safe. To say that 2020 was a challenging year for all of us is a gross understatement.

The ACBL Board met last year over 40 days as opposed to the usual 12 as there was a lot to do to keep bridge relevant during the pandemic, and I feel we were successful in doing that. Using the BBO platform we were able to run club games, special silver point club games, regional tournaments (That are for everyone not just a region) that pay gold and red points, coupled with NAOBC games both KO's and Pairs that do not pay Platinum points but 100% Gold.

This upcoming year I look to be busy in meetings as I have been assigned to some very active committees, including Finance, Strategic and Tournaments workforce groups. I hope to be able to get the units and districts relevant again as I feel we enjoy playing against people we know; it pains me that every motion I have made to include them in the Virtual world has been opposed by management which is a certain death knell to them passing. Hopefully, this can be changed. I am happy to say that the Virtual Clubs and Tournaments while not perfect have kept bridge alive and in the forefront of members minds.

The ACBL income has stabilized due entirely to cutbacks and the additional Virtual games. This of course was critical to the board's fiduciary duties of guiding the organization to survive.

Cheating at Online Bridge is of course an issue and there are many algorithms to pick up on cheaters. The reports are at an all-time high with the National Recorders office swamped with cases. In many cases they reach a negotiated resolution which is like a plea bargain in court. It is not difficult to "know" they are cheating but entirely different to "prove" so, when you see a punishment that may be less than you may think is adequate, the case against them may have had some blur to it. While very clear is not "proof beyond a reasonable doubt", we are all doing our best to stamp out cheating and consider it an important issue both in live bridge and online. To report behavior that you find suspicious please use [this form](#).

Upcoming Online Special Games are plentiful for 2021, [download this document](#) to your computer, first up is another "Silver Linings Week" Jan 18-24, all games in VC's are Silver and pay 2X Club rating.

The Future of Live Bridge in 2021 is still grim as COVID-19 continues to explode showing no mercy. We are encouraged that there is a vaccine now and frustrated by the delays in getting it to the population.

The St Louis NABC while not officially cancelled is highly doubtful and reservations have not yet opened. As you all know we are scheduled to hold a NABC in Providence this summer and a long shadow of doubt casts on this event also, but it is still a possibility if the vaccine gets to the population in the next few months and we can quell the infections. As you all realize the very function of a bridge game (cards, boards, movements, result viewing etc.) and the population we deal with has all the look of a "super-spreader event" and we will not subject our players and their families to that possibility.

All live sanctions are cancelled through 2/28/2021 and there will be a vote in January to extend this date.

IMPORTANT: We have changed the ALERT chart, please take time to [download this document](#) and read it. There are several changes that will apply to your game no matter your level of play.

THE MASTERPOINT engine will be changed to reflect "Strength of Field" (SOF) rather than table count to generate appropriate awards, I am sure you all have realized at times there is a tough swiss team running without a swiss "Gold Rush" running at the same time and the awards are far less for the winners than the previous day, this has passed the second reading.

Elections. As you probably know the board voted to change the ACBL Board of Directors to 13 rather than 25 members. No longer will each District have a representative on the board, the election was geographically split to accomplish this and the new title, will be “Regional Representative” (RR) for District 25 we are combined with District 24 (Lower NY) for voting purposes and each vote is weighted the same as before. The electors are the unit board members, and each unit is weighted by the number of members in the unit. The good news for D25 is that we have ~8000 members while D24 has ~5200 members meaning that we have the power to keep a voting member on the board due to our size. I plan to declare my candidacy for that position this year and the official election is in September for a term beginning 2022. Unit board members I am asking for your support in what will be a very important election to our district.

The Executive Committee (EC) of each district may vote to keep the position of District Director (DD) to handle some local affairs and be a liaison to the RR or elect to have the district President take on many additional tasks that are now handled by the DD.

I was not in favor of this new plan, as I do not see how less people elected by the same people will achieve better decisions, just less diversity of opinions which I find a bad thing. However, this is the new governance of the ACBL and I want to be a part of it to guide the ACBL into the future and protect its members the best I can.

Bob Bertoni

District 25 Director

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