

**Richmond Bridge Association  
Unit 109  
Board of Directors Meeting  
December 8, 2011**

**Board Members Present:** Paul Anderson, Steve Chaplin, Barry Fratkin, Harry Gellis, Ellen Hartenberg, Ed Kinlaw, Linda MacCleave, Pat McDermott, Paul McGowan, and Ruth Miles.

**Board Members Absent:** Stuart Clayman and Richard Deyerle.

**Other Unit Member Attending:** Pam Katz.

**Pam Katz--Playing Site Concerns.** Pam relayed concerns that had been expressed to her by members about unacceptable conditions in the Bridge Center building. She suggested that the RBA begin a search for a better place to hold our games and perhaps our sectionals. The Board discussed the concerns with Pam, and the following points were brought out.

- People have been looking for several years for another facility. The Board should not take that leadership, but should be willing to listen and help with someone else's plan.
- We need a place dedicated to bridge. The good thing about the Bridge Center is that it is always available for us. Lots of people who come to Richmond tell us how lucky we are to have this facility.
- A group of people invested in the Bridge Center in the 1960s. What is needed is investors--people who want to do what was done 50 years ago.
- It was explained that the RBA is not in control of the Bridge Center and suggested that people with complaints need to talk with the people who own the building. It was further explained that The Bridge Center does get a nice amount of rent from us for using the building, and that gives us some leverage to ask for things. We spearheaded the bathroom improvements and the acquisition of fans. We have people who are willing to help. Steve and Paul A., for example, have volunteered their time in making improvements.
- It was suggested to Pam that she put a plan in place, and perhaps the RBA Board would be more than willing to listen. We are not connected to the Bridge Center, and cannot address complaints.

**Treasurer's Report.** Ed did not hear from Richard, so we do not have a treasurer's report. He expressed confidence we are doing just as well as we were three months ago.

**Richmond Sectional.** Barry distributed a summary of the October Sectional and presented his report on sectionals.

- Attendance was up. We had 184 tables. The only disappointment was the Friendly Bridge Swiss which was significantly down from the last time.
- Mark Long, who runs the Moose Lodge, recognized that we might be outgrowing his facility. He will add a light up front where tables had to be added, and it was very dark.
- The door prizes that Barry and Winnie got from area restaurants went over well, and they expect to expand that. Three \$25 gift certificates each were given by Padows, Tripps, and The Greek Islands.
- Ann Duty was very well received as the director. There were lots of compliments about her, which were passed along to Millard.
- Barry timed the amount of time it took to make the boards and get started, and found that every session took 25 to 30 minutes to get seated, put the cards in suits, and make boards. He suggested that we look into using the dealing machines to speed up the game.
- In information obtained about sectionals in other nearby areas, it was found that Fredericksburg and Richmond are the only ones charging \$8.00. Others are charging \$9.00 and \$10.00. Barry noted that we netted \$675 from the October Sectional. If we charged a dollar more, we would have made an additional \$700.
- Barry decided not to give the dollar discount for carpooling because he did not think that a dollar would increase the amount of carpooling and also thought it did not help the parking lot that much.
- An extra dollar was charged to people who were not ACBL members. The difference between charging extra to new players whom we are trying to motivate to play and join and experienced players who just choose not to pay their dues to ACBL dues and have a lot of master points was addressed. Suggestions given include: (1) Give a lower fee to newcomers for the January Sunday Swiss; (2) Charge extra for nonmembers other than Friendly Bridge players, who would be given a certificate to show for a discount.
- Barry had spent some time going to possible alternative venues to the Moose Lodge, but he did not find anything that would work. Holiday Inn on West Broad (next to Reynolds, now Crown Plaza) was suggested as a possible venue. Barry had talked with them and they have plenty of room and are a strong possibility; however, they are already booked for the dates we need
- Ellen suggested that rather than provide all of the food she has been providing that we have a place where we can get box lunches to provide lunch between the games and have some snacks also.
- Barry had ACBL send an email to everybody within 200 miles of the tournament, and he thought that helped attendance.

- Ellen Hollands will take over as partnership chair.
- Everything is accounted for in the financial data. The district does a terrific job, and Ann Duty just plugged in the information and printed it all out.
- The question was raised as to who gets free plays, and Barry provided the names of persons to whom he gave free plays. Ed informed us that the current standard is to give free plays to the Tournament and Hospitality Chairs and anyone else the Tournament Chair wants to give one to.
- Linda complimented Barry on his very impressive report and thanked him for all the work he did.

**Fredericksburg Sectional.** Ed talked about the fee for the Fredericksburg Sectional Sunday Swiss game, and reminded us that we have already advertised in Table Talk at \$64. He further reminded us that we are the only ones charging \$8.00 and we might want to raise our fee to \$9.00. There was considerable discussion about reasons for raising the fee. Some of the points brought out include: (1) We are not losing money on our sectionals and have a surplus as a unit, so there is no need to raise fees; (2) The money could go toward doing a variety of things to make the sectionals better; however, we can afford to do those things now; (3) We need to look to spending down what we have now as long as we are not losing money, and from what Richard tells us on the financial reports, we are on that break-even point where we want to be because we are nonprofit and have a \$30,000 surplus; (4) We have a finance committee in place who has the job of making decisions on how money is spent, and this matter should be brought before it.

Ed noted the discrepancy between the Richmond and Fredericksburg Sunday game fee and proposed that if we increase to \$9.00 a session, we can still keep the Sunday game at \$80.00 and provide lunch. We would come up to par with the other sectionals, but we would provide lunch. Linda expressed favor for raising the fee to make us look more unified or not undercut what other sectionals are doing, but not to increase our funds.

Use of the dealing machine for making boards was suggested by Barry as further justification for the raising of fees. The logistics of using the dealing machine were discussed. There is no cost involved in using the dealing machine; however additional boards and the materials that go along with them need to be purchased. It was generally agreed that only the director or someone who will not play in the game should make the boards. It was suggested that this matter should be handled by the Finance Committee, and it was further suggested that Barry replace Ed on this committee. Ed approved Barry's joining the Finance Committee. Barry indicated a need to resolve the use of dealing machine issue before the January Sectional, and to resolve the fee issue in a timely manner for publication in the next Table Talk. Ed expressed

confidence that for the January Sectional, we will have four sets of boards made for Friday and an additional three sets made for Saturday. We can't do anything about raising the fee until June. It was suggested that we leave the price out of Table Talk. Ed informed us that the raising of fees issue will be left up to the Finance Committee.

**Christmas Mother Game.** Ed informed us that the Christmas mother is not going to be able to attend, but she is going to send one of her helpers. He mentioned that we usually have door prizes from Alfredo, Betty Loving, and The Bridge Center. Harry reported that Mimi said she will bring the tickets, and he also agreed to call Betty Loving. Ed has spoken with Mark Long, and The Moose Lodge will provide a meal similar to what he is provided for the Sunday Swiss game. He reported that some of our Friendly Bridgers will be there, meeting real bridge players for the first time. Ellen will be responsible for receiving and organizing the food that members bring. Ed will speak with Ellen Shuman about collecting donations. It was agreed that we would use ballots for voting on the Bylaws changes. Linda volunteered to make 150 ballots that would contain both of the items to be voted upon. Referencing the section of the Bylaws on elections, it was further agreed that absentee voting would be allowed. Paul M. will collect the absentee ballots from the Fredericksburg area and will require both a printed name and signature, along with an ACBL number for each vote. Linda will put the directions for how to vote on the website.

**Goodwill and Membership Committee Report.** Pat reported that she has sent 25 cards (3 sympathy, 5 congratulations, and 17 get well) since August 1, 2011, three through email and 22 through US mail, and 41 have been sent since June 1, 2011. Eighteen welcome packets have been sent since August 1, 2011, and 46 have been sent since June 1, 2011. She indicated a correction to the September 8, 2011, minutes. The cost of approximately \$1.12 each is only for postage for the welcome packets. It does not include the cost of the envelopes, paper, printing, and what goes inside the envelope.

**Charity Month & Games Report.** No report.

**I/N Committee Report.** No report.

**Educational Liaison Report.** Ed reported that we have retained about 12 of the 15 initial tables midway during our Sunday evening Friendly Bridge group. In response to a questions about retention, Ed responded that usually 3/4 of the people have played bridge before, and 1/4 have not. We retain significantly more of the people who have played before than those who have never played before. We have helpers who go around and help people who have never played before the first few weeks, but it's hard to retain them once we start playing bridge.

### **Other Business:**

- Linda expressed the desire to see the next directory turn into a members only directory rather than one that lists everyone who is playing bridge. Noting that it's difficult to call 700 people on a potential list, she suggested that we take the list of the current membership and use that as our base. She would be willing to take that list and compare it to the directory and will assume that everyone who is in the directory will have given permission to be there. The only people we would call are those who have never appeared in the directory. People who are in the directory and not on the list would be taken out. Linda volunteered to be in charge and to delegate others to help. Ruth will get an updated CVS membership file and send it to Paul M. who will make any necessary conversions and then send the file to Linda.
- Barry expressed concern that attendance is down on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights. He noted that there is a gap when you move from non life master to life master and that people with 400-500 master points often are not comfortable playing in a group of very serious players with maybe 5000 master points. He would like to see a 0-750 category on those nights. It was suggested that Barry talk with Bob Pustilnik about a Monday night 0-750 category.
- Ed expressed concern about the length of the meeting and will do his best to make the next one shorter. He thanked Ellen for hosting the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.
- The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. at Harry Gellis's Office.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth Miles, Secretary