

**DISTRICT 22 BOARD MEETING  
LABOR DAY (IRVINE) REGIONAL  
SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 7:20-9:35 PM**

**ATTENDING:**

- Christine Denny-President
- Lamy Agelidis
- Millie Garrison
- David Lodge
- Paul Markovitz
- Subba Ravipudi
- Gary Waldron

**ABSENT:**

- Vicki Graves
- Richard Pichenny
- Frank Swanson

**DISCUSSION:**

Ken Horwedel, Tournament Director, reported that attendance has been good. His rough estimate for the tournament was 900 tables, but now he thinks we will likely go over 1,000. For reference, the most recent San Diego Regional had 1,059 tables. Teams here have been approximately 50 tables. The room would hold up to 68 tables for teams and 60 tables for pairs, so there is room to grow next year, which is good since we have a two-year contract with the Irvine Marriott. Ken said the 0-500 game has few players with more than 200 points, partly because Orange County, especially San Juan Capistrano, has a solid educational program and lots of I/N players

who are attending. There have been 14-16 pairs in Gold Rush (400-750). Ken thinks we could successfully offer a midflight pairs event if our turnout were slightly larger.

Lamya points out that we cannot raise our entry fees, currently \$18, especially since players feel the financial impact when there is an additional parking fee. One significant advantage for the Palm Springs Regional is the free parking.

Ken pointed out difficulties with the bracketed teams' events. The top bracket can include one or more teams with relatively few points, which, along with other factors, leads to an awkward break in the brackets. Christine was surprised to play 3-board matches in the open pairs. Ken said he could have made a 20-table section, but that would not have been good.

Lamya praised the Irvine Marriott. Everyone who has spoken up has had nothing but praise. Lamya has found the hotel staff very accommodating, especially since they allowed us to shift funds from our room attrition obligation to cover the cost of our food and beverages. That is one of the reasons we could provide free dinners between sessions on Monday. Three weeks before the start, we were only 60 room nights short of our contracted number, but then the usual cancellations came in, and we were 100 short.

Next year, the San Diego Regional will need to be held at the same Del Mar location as this year, or the event can be cancelled. While there were problems (essentially a small playing area and insufficient lighting), there have been some improvements. They would welcome us back.

The 2026 Palm Springs Regional will likely be negatively impacted because it starts the day after the 2026 Fall NABC ends in San

Diego. David thinks attendance could be down by 30% in the worst-case scenario.

Christine discussed what clubs and units can do when players wear political attire that other players find offensive. One of the unit presidents had written to her inquiring about what, if any, guidance the district could provide. While our bylaws do not explicitly prohibit political attire, we heard anecdotes that other clubs advise their players to refrain from such attire if it is offensive to others under the auspices of our well-established Zero Tolerance mandate. The Board will not take an official position on the matter.

During Christine's Bi-monthly Zoom meeting with unit presidents, there was lots of good feedback, especially from the Bakersfield and Santa Barbara presidents, that transportation to the Labor Day tournament was a problem for many of their members because of distance and traffic congestion. While several obstacles were encountered in searching for a solution for this tournament, Lamya was impressed with the open discussions and problem-solving responses and is optimistic for the future.

Alan and Hazel Turner were praised for their "Bubbles and Bridge" program that they developed at the Bridge Club of North County to ease their graduating students' transition to face-to-face play. Gary reported that the regular 0-20 Wednesday afternoon game is a big success at San Juan Capistrano. Another benefit to the club is that mentored games and 2+ tables of supervised play provide full credit for the open game that runs simultaneously.

Christine points out that District 22 is highly regarded, and she is pleased, but she wants to increase expectations for the board. Frank's term as a board member representing Area 1 ends in December. His replacement must be very active and hardworking,

as is true for all board members. David Lodge is the current national representative for Region 11 (Districts 22 and 23). His term ends in December 2025; these and other possible transitions present challenges. We need energetic and passionate members of the board.

Paul reports that his visits to clubs have provided a lot of insight. One crucial observation he makes is the dramatic difference in clubs' problems and solutions based on their size. Small clubs have very different needs from large clubs. He is impressed with the many creative ways the units are working to recruit new members.

Lamya and Christine approached District 23 to discuss merging their district with ours. At this point, the ball is in their court. David says we should not be optimistic because there has never been a merger of two districts, and it took 40 years to pare down the ACBL structure to 11 regions.

Lamya announced that she would not manage all of our regionals in the future. She will manage Ventura this year because she has already done all the legwork. However, Vicki and Millie, Area 2 representatives, must find someone to run the Palm Springs Regional. Paul and the next Area 1 representative must find someone for the next Ventura Regional.

Paul suggests we consider adding new board members (or committee members if adding to the board would pose a problem). Christine thinks adding members to a "President's Advisory Council" could work well.

Lamya has appealed to board members to volunteer to help with the 2026 NABC. So far, she has David as Treasurer, Millie as Charity Chair, Selby Winkler as Volunteer Coordinator, and Alan and Hazel

Turner as I/N Chairs (Marjorie Michelin will also be involved with I/N).

NABC fundraiser week is November 4-11 this year. The ACBL allows the district to hold three of these fundraisers, one each year, to raise money for hosting an NABC. The extra \$4 per table goes back to the district to supplement the 2026 NABC budget.

Paul reported that Santa Barbara's membership numbers are growing, and Ventura is doing okay. He has received 4 Goodwill nominees and will resend the solicitation email to the units.

Christine announced we need to have an open membership meeting by the end of the year. The Goodwill winners will be invited. It may be scheduled for the Palm Springs Regional.

Millie recommended supporting a Best Practices Teacher Workshop December 14-15. The ACBL provides the teacher, and the district provides the space and refreshments. The Duncan Bridge Center in Palm Desert will allow us to use their facility. The ACBL requires guaranteed payment for 20 attendees. The cost to attend is \$125, and the optional assessment costs \$25. If we don't get enough people signed up, we can cancel at no cost with 30 days' notice. At the moment, 12 people have expressed interest. The Board agreed to support the workshop. Some units have offered to pay the student fees for their members who attend.

Millie shared a potential model Christine had requested to determine which classes the D22 Board would fund. The various criteria were discussed, and Christine asked Millie to write a paragraph about it. David pointed out that formerly units received 11% of what they earned from the ACBL and that now it is a 5%-5%-5% arrangement. The first 5% rewards growth, the second rewards

retention, and the third rewards recruitment. The ACBL's free guest member program tracks new guest members in "Unit 999," which means the unit where they live and probably took a class does not get the recruitment credit. Unit presidents are unhappy.

David is embarrassed about our district's lack of NAP representatives. We also need more GNT teams, especially in the B and C brackets. Perhaps this situation is partially due to the financial incentives being taken away. Should we reinstate the stipends? Lamya got a helpful presentation from D17 about team play for the GNT, which she will share. David encouraged each Board member to help recruit more players for these events.

David reports that as of July 1, 2025, we will no longer have an exclusive contract with BBO, which is good news. After that, other suitable online venues, such as Shark, RealBridge, and LoveBridge, will become viable options for ACBL members.

The Palm Springs Regional was scheduled to end on Saturday, but we have now added an online regional on Sunday. Lamya will write a paragraph about it for the online flyer and other materials.

The next meeting will be at the Palm Springs Regional, with date and time to be announced.

Minutes submitted by:

Millie Garrison