

Thank you all for coming to this meeting tonight.

This is the first Board Election when the Financial Members of Chicago Duplicate Bridge Club are voting to fill Vacancies on the Board of Chicago Duplicate Bridge Inc.

The Nominees Qualifications and the “Words” that they provided to explain what they will actively contribute to the running and growth of Chicago Duplicate Bridge Club were distributed to Financial Members to enable them to make informed decisions.

I want to also assure you that your continuing Board Members will continue to be financially and actively committed to the Club and it’s wellbeing and growth going forward.

I do believe **ALL** our current Financial Members, present or not, remain committed to the continuation of Bridge in the City.

A highlight of this past year was Chicago Duplicate Bridge Inc. obtaining 501(c)(3) status. The charitable activities of Windy City Bridge, the not-for-profit club that operated within the Chicago Bridge Center and our own early charitable donations were responsible for this achievement.

The mission of Chicago Duplicate Bridge Inc. is to encourage and further increase Bridge in the City of Chicago. All Board Members must be fully committed to this mission.

They must have the best interests of all of our Members and players at heart and work to keep Bridge alive here in the City.

Chicago Duplicate Bridge Inc. is neither a “RICH” or fashionable organization. But in keeping with the mission of Not-For-Profit Organizations, **ALL** Board Members are obligated to support Chicago Duplicate Bridge with annual financial contributions and/or donations “in kind”, incidental to their board position.

We encourage a sense of belonging to a Club rather than viewing Chicago Duplicate Bridge as a “place to play bridge” by providing all of our members with nametags. Most new Members are proud to wear theirs and foster a friendly CLUB atmosphere for even more new Players.

AND new players ARE the way forward, as they will ensure the Club remains financially viable and ensures it’s survival, as the Bridge Community world wide unfortunately IS aging.

To this end we are providing a path to bridge “adulthood” through

Lessons - thank-you Michael Mehringer

Newcomer Referrals - thank-you Jane Kennedy, Ellen and Richard Gabriel

Supervised Play - thank you Barry Little and Michael Mehringer

99er, 299er and 499er Section Play alongside our Open Games

We've also benefitted from some generous members – A Bridge Clock, new plastic Bidding cards and beautiful catering.

Another highlight of the year was the switch to our new web presence at www.bridgewebs.com/chicagodbco that provides many wonderful bridge oriented facilities to all players. However, many players have not “signed-on” and are not benefitting from the site.

So over the next month I will volunteer a short lesson on using the site. My proposed schedule is Saturday and Sunday next week, Monday and Thursday the following week then Tuesday and Thursday the 3rd week.

Players can sign up with me or at the club so that I'll know if I need to come in on day's I don't play

Lastly, I'd like to thank Dr. Seymour Diamond who is retiring from the Board this year. Seymour was instrumental in obtaining our premises and the subsidized parking we enjoy. His contacts also enabled us to have access immediately to Gino's and subsidized Valet Parking so that Bridge in the City ran uninterrupted from October 2014.

Thankfully the horrendous pressure on the parking brought on by the 2 nearby major construction projects is diminishing now that they're in their final stages. While there will be more construction projects in the vicinity, it shouldn't be a double whammy like we've just endured.

Seymour's interest in and concern for the future of Chicago Duplicate Bridge continues beyond his retirement and the Board, in recognizing this, decided to award him Emeritus standing. Seymour may attend any Board Meeting where his input will always be welcome.

And I believe Seymour has a few words of his own - Seymour

Thank you Seymour

In closing, you, our Members should take pride in what we have achieved so far.

And we should all look forward to continued growth and greater achievements in the years ahead.