

**District V Executive Board Meeting**  
**August 28, 2025,**  
**at the DoubleTree by Hilton in the Meadowlands**

Present: Barb Bacon, Jim Overcashier, Sharon Fairchild, Davis Heussler, Dian Petrov, June Threlkeld, Sandi Bross and Jim Knirsch

Absent: Barbara Grzegorzewski

Guests: Margot Hennings, Pat Levy and Steve Allen.

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 AM by President Barbara Bacon.

She thanked the members for being there and introduced our guests: Margot Hennings is President of the ACBL and our Region 4 Director, Pat Levy our Tournament Coordinator, and Steve Allen, one of our representatives to the Advisory Council along with Steve Grzegorzewski and Dian Petrov. She also thanked everyone for their support during her presidency.

She reminded tournament chairpersons that we are charging tournament entries of \$16 per session beginning October 1.

She has located all of the District 5 supplies

Cleveland has 550-600 bidding boxes and 2 timers that are stored for free by the Cleveland Unit.

Most of Buffalo's tables are stored in Erie. The bidding boxes and timers are in Davis' basement.

Pitt has about 100 tables that are owned by the district as well as bidding boxes. We pay half of the storage.

There are also 2 refrigerators stored in Mary Carn's basement.

We think our Bridgmates are with Alex and Barb will check with him and how many we have.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

Sharon sent out the minutes of the June 26, 2025 meeting to the attendees. Jimmy moved to approve the minutes as written, and Dian seconded. The motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:**

| <b>Cash Position as of July 31, 2025</b> |               |
|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Edward Jones                             | \$ 112,717.85 |
| Chase Checking Account                   | \$ 24,873.40  |
| Outstanding Checks                       |               |
| Pianola                                  | \$ (500.00)   |
| Jim Overcashier Cleveland                | \$ (773.11)   |
| Embassy Suites                           | \$ (9,381.23) |
| Barb Bacon Cleveland                     | \$ (60.00)    |
| GNT stipends/entry fees                  | \$ (4,480.00) |
| Year End stipends                        | \$ (700.00)   |
| Advance Pittsburgh                       |               |
| Hotel Deposit                            | \$ 500.00     |
| Fast Results                             | \$ 200.00     |
|                                          | \$ 122,396.91 |

| ACBL District 5                                |             |             |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Statement of Financial Activities              |             |             |
| for the period August 1, 2024 - July 31, 2025  |             |             |
| <u>Program Revenue/Expenses</u>                |             |             |
| Program Revenue                                |             |             |
| Cleveland January                              | \$25,830.00 |             |
| Cleveland June                                 | \$28,352.00 |             |
| Pittsburgh September                           | \$23,970.00 |             |
| Buffalo October                                | \$10,980.00 |             |
| North American Pairs                           | \$3,360.00  |             |
| Winter StAC                                    | \$581.90    |             |
| Summer StAC                                    | \$586.50    |             |
| Grand National Teams                           | \$3,360.00  |             |
| Grass Roots Subsidy/Income                     | \$2,070.54  |             |
| Book Seller                                    | \$278.12    | \$99,369.06 |
| Program Expenses                               |             |             |
| Cleveland January                              | \$19,920.03 |             |
| Cleveland June                                 | \$21,594.30 |             |
| Pittsburgh September                           | \$24,733.08 |             |
| Buffalo October                                | \$13,616.08 |             |
| North American Pairs                           | \$3,920.90  |             |
| Winter StAC                                    | \$0.00      |             |
| Summer StAC                                    | \$0.00      |             |
| Grand National Teams                           | \$3,707.01  |             |
| District 5 Subsidy to GNT                      | \$4,000.00  |             |
| Pianola Emails                                 | \$750.00    |             |
| Book Seller                                    | \$0.00      | \$92,241.40 |
| Program Net Revenue                            |             | \$7,127.66  |
| <u>Other Revenue/M&amp;A Expenses</u>          |             |             |
| Other Revenue                                  |             |             |
| Interest/Dividends                             |             |             |
| Miscellaneous                                  | \$25.00     |             |
| District 5 Expenses                            |             |             |
| Insurance Renewal                              | \$200.00    |             |
| 990N Tax Return Preparation                    | \$520.00    |             |
| Web Hosting                                    | \$395.64    |             |
| Pittsburgh Uhaul Storage                       | \$930.60    |             |
| Bank Fees                                      | \$60.00     |             |
| Education Supplies (Reimbursement)             | \$793.79    |             |
| Year End Stipends                              | \$700.00    |             |
| Pittsburgh Meeting Food/Drinks                 | \$111.36    |             |
| Pittsburgh BOD Lodging                         | \$1,085.28  |             |
| Pittsburgh BOD Free Plays                      | \$390.00    |             |
| Buffalo BOD Lodging                            | \$1,064.72  |             |
| Buffalo BOD Free Plays                         | \$435.00    |             |
| Cleveland January BOD Lodging                  | \$1,295.68  |             |
| Cleveland January BOD Free Plays               | \$960.00    |             |
| Cleveland June BOD Lodging                     | \$2,143.01  |             |
| Cleveland June BOD Free Plays                  | \$960.00    |             |
| Cleveland June Meeting Food/Drinks             | \$875.53    |             |
| Cleveland January Meeting Food/Drinks          |             | \$12,920.61 |
| Other Revenue/M&A Expenses Net                 |             | \$12,920.61 |
| Net Revenue for August 1, 2024 - July 31, 2025 |             | \$5,792.95  |

## **Margot's Report:**

Margot is a bit jet lagged after her trip to Denmark, but she offered to answer any questions we have about the disciplinary procedures or anything else.

They are looking for a way to provide the players in the GNTs with their entry fees. It may or may not pass the board or even the finance committee, but Margot will let us know if it happens or not.

Margot attended the World Bridge Federation meeting in Denmark, where there were marketing programs explained to the attendees. The focus was on getting more people started to play bridge. She will send the presentations from the French "Petit Bridge", the World Bridge Academy and Under 14 Tournaments information for the secretary to send to you.

## **Rock and Roll Regional 2026**

Jim Knirsch reported that the flyer is at ACBL for approval. There are plans for having 2 (0-20 mp) games held in a separate room from the ballroom. They plan to heavily promote those games.

They will be working on a contract for 2027 very soon.

## **All American Regional**

Jim Overcasher reported that the 2025 tournament made money. It was the first time we held it in June rather than May and it was 6 instead of 7 days. The date change didn't seem to be an issue. He is working on the contract for 2026 for a tournament from Tuesday through Sunday, the same week in June as 2025.

## **Buffalo**

Davis reported that there will not be a regional in Buffalo this year. He is thinking about holding a novice/intermediate regional next year in either Buffalo or Erie. He plans to look into the possibilities.

## **Tournament Coordinator**

Pat Levy passed out the current tournament schedules. ACBL wants the flyers at least a year in advance, so she urges you to get them in. As a note, ACBL is not approving tournament schedules that the starting time for the second session is less than 5 hours after the beginning of the first session. Those have to be corrected before the tournament will be approved.

## **Advisory Council reports**

Dian Petrov said that ACBL had a proposal to remove the requirement for written defenses to the Multi 2 Diamond convention.

Bronia Jenkins is proposing Titanium Points for NABC events that are not NABC+ events. They would replace gold points at the Nationals.

Online ACBL masterpoints will now be awarded on 6 different online platforms – BBO, Real Bridge,

Into Bridge, and others. Real Bridge is an effective platform for team games.

ACBL now has free guest memberships that can be used up to the point that you have earned 20 master points.

Dian reports that people that have been disciplined may be allowed to play in club games with the permission of the clubs. Margot will send out a letter about CDR changes.

Dian says in Social Media, we have a Facebook page where people may post pictures.]

As Membership chairman, Dian needs the Quip report.

Steve Allen added that if disciplined people are permitted to play in a club, they man not play with their “partners in crime”.

Steve Grzegorzewski submitted a written report that Sharon read to the attendees:

**Advisory Council Report – (Steven Grzegorzewski)**

AC and General Membership meeting (Philadelphia NABC):

1. Guest membership (ACBL) will be free fully open-ended. ACBL intent is to focus on nurturing guest members using a newly formed “Sapphire Program” which provides benchmarks and incentives to engage new members and move them into Active ACBL Membership. The Sapphire Program is just newly rolling out since May 2025 and is producing much interesting data analytics that will hopefully be useful for ACBL marketing and recruitment by the time one year of data is procured.
2. Restructuring of the NABC structure (points and events) is in a proposal stage and will be discussed further at the fall NABC meeting. Formal proposals for discussion may become available for review just prior to that meeting.
3. The Code of Disciplinary Regulations (CDR) has proposed changes that will reduce current punishments for players who engaged in illicit collusion (on-line cheating) in some cases in the 2020-2021 time-frame. Players with less than 5000 MasterPoints will be given an official warning (a black-mark of permanent record) but will be reinstated for all sanctioned club and tournament play. Others who admitted to cheating on-line and accepted fast-track discipline will be permitted to play in Face-to-Face clubs at the discretion of club managers. The AC discussed this proposal further during a virtual meeting on August 15 th and did not oppose it going forward at this point.
4. CEO Bronia Jenkins reported that current ACBL membership is 121K and has been on a steady decline of approximately 10K members per year for the past 5 years, describing it as “crisis mode” at this point. ACBL membership peaked at 191K in 1991. Steven G. addressed the meeting briefly as Chair of the Club & Teacher Committee to point up this fact and stressed that player outreach especially to teach new players of all stripes is critical for the survival of the ACBL. Steven encouraged all ACBL stakeholders to take a more active role promoting and providing of bridge education (especially for new players). Currently the combined effort among all ACBL stakeholders is less than 7%, which was born out of out our recent spring educational survey of all ACBL stakeholders.

## **AC Club & Teacher Committee**

1. The committee met on August 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the details of the spring educational survey of all ACBL stakeholders (Regional Directors, Districts, Units, & Clubs). As stated above, the state of decline in ACBL membership is devastating and requires an “all-hands-on-deck” approach. Research of successful growth models for organization of our size require approximately 25% focused participation amongst all stakeholders. We fall far short of that and have been doing so for quite some time. The committee will meet to discuss ideas for how to best move forward prior to the fall NABC.

2. The preliminary details for the design of the newly instituted Sapphire Program for new Guest members were seen for the first time. It included a small amount of data since its roll-out in May and will be actively tweaked by ACBL management over the next few months. The full scope of how valuable this new program is, has much to be fleshed out over the next 6 months as data continues to accumulate. Some of the D5 new players (in Educ classes) in the Pittsburgh area are part of the current data set. Only newly signed up players (guest members in active education classes) since mid-May are included in the program. All new players with this status will be added going forward.

## **NAP/GNT**

June Threlkeld has flyers on the partnership table for the NAP in October. If you want to be sure you are qualified for the event, you can call ACBL or Ron to confirm. The GNT held in May had a major complaint that players didn’t know whether to book a hotel room if they had to play the next day. A format change that would allow all players to play on the second day would solve this problem.

## **Education Report**

Barb G. submitted a report that Barb B. read at the meeting.

August, 2025 Education Report B. Grzegorzewski

Even with the decreasing trends in A.C.B.L. membership, District 5 continues to work diligently along with many Units to increase membership and participation. Erie (127) and Meadville (226) has just completed three years of new player lessons, mentoring play, supervised play and extended teaching support for new players. Steve Grzegorzewski has been the main driving force behind that mission. He has recruited support from many other players among Units 127 and 226 to make this effort a successful endeavor.

Additional District 5 units are stepping up the teaching effort and incorporating new players into their games. We are aware of active programs in Cleveland (Bernie Greenspan), Pittsburgh (Bill Holt) and Youngstown (Carol Rich).

I will be starting a new class of gifted high school students taking bridge this fall (2025/2026 school year). The Howard Lebow scholarship that is administered by District 5 provides financial support for a high school or college bridge student but has not been awarded in a few years.

District 5 has so far awarded matching funds for advertising (to Units 125 & 127) to support the teaching programs for new players. The District 5 board is very aware that teaching and attracting new players is essential for stability and growth, and continues to offer support and encouragement necessary for success.

On Saturday (8/23) the Erie Unit 127 ran a 12 table Pro-Am Swiss Team (& picnic) to expose new players to team play. It is essential for clubs to provide a variety of bridge experiences to enhance participation. Everyone had a good time. It is hoped that increasing the pool of club players (especially Face-to-Face) newer players will be more receptive to playing in local tournaments.

## **STaC**

Davis reported that STaCs make money and we don't have to work at it. We will have a new STaC for D5 the week of October 6<sup>th</sup>. We will plan an additional STaC next year.

## **Old Business**

The unit 185 dissolution: The expectation is that we will be done by October 1.

The Committee to make recommendations on whether and how we could give the Pittsburgh Unit the ability to run the regional themselves made a report. The Committee of Jim Knirsch, Jim Overcashier and Sandi Bross met, and they decided that we should delay any decision in this matter until

1. the tournament is over, and we see how it does.
2. The Pittsburgh unit wants to go forward, and
3. They submit a business plan for how they plan to do that.

We are responsible for seeing that it is a successful tournament.

It was pointed out that our bylaws would have to be changed to allow this. We have a tentative contract for 2026 here at this hotel at the same price for the dates of 9/15 – 9/19. If the survey results are positive, the board thinks we should sign the contract.

## **Elections**

Tomorrow we will have elections. The slate is Davis for President, Steve G. as Vice-President and Sandi Bross. Jim O moved to approve the slate and Dian seconded and the slate was approved.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM Motioned by Jim O and seconded by Jim K.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Fairchild, Secretary