

Hello, I'd like to thank you all for coming out to the AGM. I know most of you but there are a few that I don't. My name's Ray Hornby in case we haven't met, or been introduced, or whatever. At present I'm the outgoing President of the elected board of directors that looks after governance and operating issues for ACBL Unit 181, aka Bridge Manitoba. I intend to stay on the board as Past President for the next year at least.

One person I'd like to mention right off is Bill Treble, who many of you know from his Wednesday evening and Thursday afternoon games that he runs privately here at Soul Sanctuary. You may also know him from the bridge books he's written or the many bridge lesson courses he's taught. Bill has had some health issues recently so you may have wondered how he is doing. I have it on relatively good authority that he's just waiting on a physical rehab spot to help complete his recovery. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

Our slate of board directors has decreased by one from last year with Bob Neudorf deciding to leave after serving as Treasurer the last few years. Thank you Bob. The rest of the current board continues to work hard to keep sanctioned duplicate bridge alive and well here at Bridge Manitoba. Organized bridge doesn't happen without member involvement, something always welcome (and needed) to run club games, tournaments, and other special events. As a volunteer non-profit organization, we're always on the lookout for members who want to help in any way, even if it's taking tickets at an event, being on a phoning committee, setting up/cleaning up at special events, or any number of other things.

Bridge Manitoba holds a social evening in the first quarter of the year, along with spring and fall tournaments as part of our efforts to provide more than just club bridge for our membership. We have another Regional coming up this Fall, so those looking for gold masterpoints have something extra to look forward to later this year. We also have a website with a lot of content, www.bridgemanitoba.org, ably maintained by Marsha Kimelman.

We also provide card fee subsidies for unit members progressing to the Canadian National Championship knockout rounds where Canada's International teams are decided. We had members of a Senior and a Mixed team make it to that level last year, with the Mixed Team winning their event and qualifying to go on the World Championships in Denmark. Two members of that team, Marielle Brentnall and Bob Kuz, did go to the Worlds, where unfortunately their team did not enjoy the same success as at the Nationals. Quite an accomplishment, nonetheless. We were able to help Marielle and Bob with a travel subsidy to the event to help defray their personal costs. Canada's national bridge organization, the CBF, has ongoing financial issues and is not able to provide significant financial assistance to members representing Canada in International events. Part of this has to do with only 25% of Canadian ACBL members paying CBF dues. I encourage you all to consider opting to pay those dues if you don't already, as it would help them financially, not to mention strengthening the organization that represents us at the National/International level. Check out their website if you haven't already, www.cbf.ca, there's lots of interesting content there including a digital magazine, Canada's version of the ACBL Bulletin.

At the club level, we host Tuesday evening supervised play, Wednesday afternoon open pairs, Thursday evening under 200 MP pairs, and Saturday afternoon open teams. Dave West and Gary Parker run

Tuesday evening with help from a number of volunteer facilitators to make that evening the ongoing success that it is. I don't have a list of all the volunteers, but you know who you are. Tuesday Supervised Play typically wraps up for the summer in June, with some of the proceeds from the game used by Dave to take his crew out for dinner and a drink. Well done.

Dave also continues to grow the Wednesday afternoon Pairs game, one his many regulars enjoy for its surprise treats and pithy weekly invites. Freddie Mykytyshyn continues to grow the Thursday evening under 200 game, along with doing a great job running the Saturday team game. Speaking of Saturdays, we're trying out a 4 week mini-SP on Saturdays for graduates from Jim & Keran Sanders beginner lessons that's looking good with 20 newer players getting some help working on the basics.

Returning to SP for a minute, it's an integral part of our efforts to grow the membership in the game we all love to play. That effort starts with twice yearly LHTPB all day seminars where John Hindle and Marielle Brentnall do their very best to introduce prospective members to the magic of a game that you most certainly cannot learn to play in a day, though they give it their best shot. Moving on from LHTPB, participants have the SP option as well as beginner lessons hosted by Jim & Keran Sanders. Once they've got their bearings at the intro level, those wanting more can move on to Freddie's Thursday beginner game and Dave's very welcoming Wednesday open game. The other open games are of course also available. Another avenue for improving bridge skill sets are intermediate bridge courses offered by one of our more recent members, Dennis Glazebrook. The ACBL also has a number of resources for new players

I was told to keep it short because we have a lot to do in this hour, so I'm going to conclude by thanking you all again for attending today, also by thanking past, current, and future board members for helping to make sanctioned bridge a viable reality here. Now I'll put my Treasurer's hat on and give you the financial report so we can get moving toward lunch and the team game afterward.