

Thanks to everyone for coming out on such a nice, but windy day, I'll try to keep this brief.

2023 was our 1st full calendar year post-Covid, nice to have a return to some new sort of normal. We even made some money this year, more on that later from Bob.

First I'd like to thank a couple of long time board members, Deloris Ankrom and Marielle Brentnall, who are leaving the board after many years of service. Their contributions to the Unit are very appreciated. I'm hoping we'll still be able to get some partnership work out them, something they've done very well over any number of years. I'd also like to thank our departing tournament/special events chair, Paulette Desaulniers, who brought a great deal of energy and organization to her role.

On the subject of board members, I'd like to thank all of the rest of the current board for their efforts in keeping sanctioned duplicate bridge alive and well here in ACBL Unit 181, aka Bridge Manitoba. It doesn't happen without member involvement, something always welcome (and needed) in order to run club games, tournaments, and the like.

2023 saw a full return to F2F bridge here at Soul Sanctuary and at KW in Westwood, not to mention a number of community center games that I'm told have very good attendance. Bill Treble also is running games here at Soul Sanctuary, Wednesday evening teams as Ambassador BC and Thursday afternoon Pairs as Lorraine's BC.

Bridge Manitoba holds a social evening in February and spring and fall tournaments as part of our efforts to provide more than just club bridge for our membership. On the subject of special events, I'd like to thank Jason Walpole for his very affordable catering contributions to making them a success.

Bridge Manitoba currently hosts Tuesday evening supervised play, Wednesday afternoon open pairs, Thursday evening under 200 MP pairs, and Saturday afternoon open teams. A special shout out to Jeff Gosman who started the Tuesday evening SP a couple of years back and has made it into a going concern. He's had a lot of help from any number of dedicated volunteer facilitators who show up consistently to make that evening the ongoing success that it is. I don't have a list of all the volunteers and don't want to leave anyone out, so we'll leave it at that. I'd also like to thank Dave West for growing the Wednesday afternoon Pairs into a very good game, not to mention his numerous contributions to Tuesday evening. Freddie Mykytyshyn completed his director training a while back and has done a great job taking over running the Saturday team game. He also started up the Thursday 0-200 game which is well attended. Finally, he's going to take a crack at starting an every other week Tuesday evening SP team game over the summer as the regular SP game ends in June and doesn't restart until September.

Speaking of September, we'll be holding a 4-day Regional here in late September, the first since 2017. Access to gold points without having to travel, make sure it's on your calendar.

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 and 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 initiative we have is the mentorship program, capably run by Gloria Woloshyn, where players ready to advance their skills are matched up with a more skilled player that can hopefully help them achieve their goals. One other avenue for improving bridge skill sets are a series of intermediate bridge courses offered by Bill Treble, usually twice yearly. Bill has an extensive bridge background and is the author of several well reviewed intermediate bridge books.

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. I'll turn it over now to Bob Neudorf to give his financial report.