



## B's Needs Committee Meeting Sunday, 2/16/2014 Cromwell, CT

The B's Needs Committee met on Sunday, 2/16/14, in Cromwell. In attendance were: Linda Ahrens, Mark Aquino, Wayne Burt, Lois DeBlois, Sandy DeMartino, Bob Derrah, Jane Clancy, Bob Eachus, Ausra Geaski, Tom Greehan, Helen Pawlowski, Joyce Stiefel, Mike Wavada, Carolyn Weiser, and Sarah Widhu.

Ausra Geaski, Chairperson for the Committee, welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were several new members who joined the meeting and the group did roundtable introductions. Six of the eight D25 Units were represented. The goal is to have all units participate to help the committee better understand the needs across the district and have B's Needs representatives in each unit.

Several of the recommendations from the B's Needs Committee were implemented in Cromwell thanks to the overwhelming support of many volunteers. The group discussed the various action items to solicit feedback and look for any opportunities to refine/improve them. The intent is to keep the momentum going and continue those items that were well-received by the players at future D25 tournaments.

- 1) **Hospitality Table:** Players were greeted in Cromwell by volunteers manning a Hospitality Table. They were there to answer any questions, ask players to fill out a registration card and gave out stickers for the regional.
  - Player feedback was very favorable and players felt there was a very welcoming atmosphere at the tournament. They especially enjoyed the volume and selection for the candy bowls, as well as, the heart stickers which aligned to the theme of Valentine's Day at the Cromwell tournament.
  - One watch out for this activity is for the registration cards. Some players do not wish to provide some/all of their personal information (phone #, email address). Players should be asked, but not required, to fill out the cards.
  - Sandy DeMartino chaired this successful effort and engaged many volunteers who were available at the Hospitality table before and after each event.
  - Ginny Iannini, chairperson for the Cape, will take responsibility for this at the Seniors regional.
  - Sarah Widhu and Bob Eachus will work with Wayne Burt, chairperson in Nashua, to continue this in Nashua.
- 2) **Photographs of Event Winners:** Players who won an event were asked to come to the Pairing table after the event to have their pictures taken. The pictures would be placed on the D25 website after the tournament.
  - Some players came to have their pictures taken but others preferred not to do so.
  - One suggestion was to ask the directors to announce this at each event which helped to increase the number of players who showed up for pictures.
  - Mike Wavada, the D25 Webmaster, chaired this effort with help from several volunteers who served as photographers.
  - Mike will continue this at future regionals but will need help from the B's Needs members to take photographs. Please contact him if you can help @ [Mike@Wavada.org](mailto:Mike@Wavada.org).
- 3) **Leader Board:** Daily updates were posted on a Leader Board of the top masterpoint winners at the regional in Flight A, Flight B, and Flight C.
  - Player feedback was positive on having the lists updated and posted daily.
  - One watch out for this is that the list of names is provided by the Director-in-Charge each day but needs to be formatted and printed before posting. Some word processing skills are needed to be able to produce the final list for posting.
  - Helen Pawlowski, D25 Tournament Manager, had done this in prior tournaments and was very helpful in continuing this in Cromwell.
  - Ginny Iannini volunteered to take point for this at the Seniors Regional at the Cape.
  - Sarah Widhu volunteered to take point for this in Nashua.
  - Lois DeBlois volunteered to take point for this in Warwick.
- 4) **Suggestion Box:** A suggestion box was placed near the Hospitality and Pairing tables for players to give their comments and suggestions for the D25 tournaments.

- One suggestion was received to keep Sunday Swiss in Cromwell at 8 rounds of 7 boards.
- We need to remind players who express a concern or have a suggestion to write down their comments and place in the box. Also, any comments from players given directly to B's Needs members for future changes can be written down and placed in the box so the comment is not lost. Any matter needing immediate attention at the tournament should be brought to the attention of the Tournament Manager.
- Helen Pawlowski made the Suggestion Box and will display it at future regionals.

The Committee was provided an update on the 2 additional items which require further assessment:

- 1) **Professions Guest Speaker:** Feasibility of inviting a professional guest speaker to attend a D25 regional and conduct guest lectures.
  - Joyce Stiefel did research on this topic and obtained some high level costs to have a Pro attend the regional. Due to the projected expense Mark Aquino, D25 President, indicated that the cost was not within the current budget of the district and suggested we consider alternatives. Mark volunteered to work with Joyce to look at other options and would get back to the group.
  - Helen Pawlowski mentioned that we had tried this in the past with local Pros doing lectures and panels (Ask the Pro) with mixed reactions. We need to consider the best format for future events and how to publicize this to maximize the benefits.
  - Suggestions from the group included:
    - Ask local Pros to do a session on a specific topic (can have multiple sessions during regional with different Pros like the Nationals)
    - Pro session(s) to review the hands from the previous event (especially for I/N group)
    - Early morning speaker (9 am) – Get your coffee and join a Pro for a lesson
    - Evening session after 2<sup>nd</sup> game – Sell tickets to a buffet supper which includes a bridge lecture
    - Publicize event at club games before the regional
- 2) **Pro-Am Game:** Have a Pro-Am game as one of the evening events at the regionals.
  - Bob Bertoni, chair of the Scheduling Committee, brought this forward to the Executive Committee (EC) meeting on 2/15. The EC agreed with having the event and tasked the B's Needs Committee to work through the logistics (strats for Pro and AM, timeframes) and present a recommendation for the event. They, also, suggested that this be a Charity event.
  - Carolyn Weiser, D25 Secretary, offered to send the strats used by EMBA for their Pro/Am game.
  - Anyone willing to work on this should contact Ausra Geaski @ [ausrag@aol.com](mailto:ausrag@aol.com)

Other items discussed included:

- 1) Many players stop coming to tournaments after they become Life Masters. They have a perception that there are no other significant goals and prefer to play only at club games. If they felt there were other recognition milestones they may choose to attend tournaments.
- 2) In other districts there are volunteers who send emails, postcards or do some other type of recognition to individuals to recognize their achievements in bridge. This group may want to consider how/when we reach out to individuals to provide some form of personal recognition.
- 3) The B's Needs Committee will help to document a manual of the activities being implemented at the regionals. This will serve as a checklist for all tournaments with helpful Do's and Don'ts for each activity. If anyone would like to help with this effort please contact Ausra Geaski @ [ausrag@aol.com](mailto:ausrag@aol.com)

The B's Needs Committee will have their next meeting at the Nashua regional. Thanks to everyone for their ongoing commitment and support. Additional members to the group and volunteers are very much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

*Ausra*

Ausra Geaski  
B's Needs Tournament Chairperson