

**Unit 508 January 2010 Board of Directors meeting
January 26,2010**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 by Gene Simpson

Present: Ron Studen, Jim Cohen, Debbie Levine, Lynn Blankfort, Richard Mani, Alex Kinas, Gwen Toso, Michael Nistler.

Secretary's Report: The December minutes were approved as written

Treasurer's Report: The Unit has \$16,151.00. The district will attempt to do a Group filing for Income Tax purposes. The Marin portion of that filing has been completed and will be sent to the District.

Richard moved that we reimburse the clubs at the present rate that they are charging for free plays. It was seconded and approved.

Gene suggested that we give free plays to the winners of each flight in subsequent Unit games. It was approved. Gene announced that he will not accept a free play in this situation.

Richard moved that our fiscal year be changed to end December 31st. It was seconded and approved.

Membership: There are 596 members.

Education: Vicki Lerner will speak on Sunday Feb 21st from 10:00 to noon on "Slam bidding.". Terry Terzian will be the speaker on Sunday May 2nd. Both seminars will be at the Terra Linda Rec Center. Ron moved that we pay the facility \$130.00 for the extra maintenance for each free seminar. It was seconded and approved.

Tournament Report: Jim Cohen volunteered to be Tournament Chair for 2011. Richard presented the flyer which was corrected and approved. He will have the copies ready shortly to be distributed to the other units in the area.

Richard also said that he is planning to get part-time paid help this year instead of having volunteers help out in between rounds. Richard confirmed that Marin Catholic will provide insurance (injury and workman's compensation) for these part-time workers under their umbrella policy.

Jim made a motion to allow anyone under 18 years of age to play free at our sectional. Alex seconded the motion and it was approved.

Old Business:

Unit Games: The Calendar for 2010 was approved as written.

Public address system. Here is the status report from Michael Nistler.

On Sunday, Jim Cohen and I tested our Unit's "public address" system. The system includes a compact amplifier/speaker, wireless receiver, two wireless transmitters, tripod stand and carrying cases.

Based on the testing, here's our analysis:

1. The amplifier/speaker works reasonably well in a confined area. For instance, the speaker can be heard within about 50 feet provided the ambient noise (chatty students/players) are not too loud. However, the speaker is minimally adequate for a "full house" of 100+ players at the Terra Linda Rec Center. For sure, the system would be inadequate for our Sectional tournaments, etc.

2. The large handheld wireless microphone works best, providing a strong audio output with a normal volume from the announcer/teacher.

3. The small lavalier wireless microphone provides a faint audio output with normal placement (on the announcer/teacher's sternum). To get a more reasonable audio output, the announcer/teacher must hold the small microphone within an inch or two from their mouth.

4. If the announcer/speaker elects to use the small lavalier wireless microphone and we attempt to turn-up the volume on the amplifier/speaker (so the audience can hear), the system will produce a terrible squeal (regenerative feedback). Apparently this is what happened when the Board attempted to setup the system for Barbara Seagram.

5. I believe the small wireless system could be improved by replacing the clip-on lavalier with an over-the-ear vocalist microphone (costing perhaps \$100). Getting the mic within an inch of the subject's mouth should eliminate our current problem with the small lavalier wireless mic. Of course, the main advantage of the small wireless mic is the ability to have both hands free (great for teachers). Also, our system seems to be configured to allow **two** simultaneous wireless mics. This could be a very nice feature allowing a teacher/announcer to chat using an over-the-ear microphone, with the student (bridge player, etc) to query or respond using the large handheld wireless mic (so the entire assembly can hear the question/comment).

In summary, with careful setup, our P.A. system should be useful for most Unit functions (holiday parties, moderately sized classes, etc) but is not sufficient to meet more demanding applications (large noisy classes/events, Sectional tournaments, etc). If appropriate, we may wish to consider replacing the small clip-on (sternum-based) microphone with an over-the-ear vocalist type mic. Finally, for large assemblies such as our Sectional, we should consider renting a large P.A. system; as we have previously discussed, my system is also available.

New Business:

Executive Committee was appointed by Gene to include Debbie and Jim for decisions in between board meetings.

Ethics report: Gene reported that this committee had met and he read some of the points discussed. Debbie moved that a quarter board penalty will be levied to anyone answering a cell phone during play at a Unit Game. Lynn seconded the motion and it was approved. This was the only point on which action was taken by the board.

Charity Games: These games will award double master points on the next Sunday Unit Game February 7th.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE TUESDAY FEBRUARY 16TH AT 3:30 P.M. AT PICKLEWEED.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m. by Gene Simpson.

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Blankfort, Secretary