

# CONTRACT BRIDGE Forum



## The Ruidoso Aspengold Regional

October 5-11, 2009



The Lodge at Sierra Blanca

Here is your opportunity to play in a regional in a different part of our district. The Ruidoso Aspengold Regional is scheduled October 5-11 at the Ruidoso Convention Center in beautiful Ruidoso, New Mexico. The host hotel is The Lodge at Sierra Blanca, right next to the tournament site. The tournament

website at [ruidosobridge.com](http://ruidosobridge.com) has more information.

An expected schedule will be packed full with plenty of choices - pair games and teams games (of course, plenty of Knockouts).

There are plenty of interesting attractions in the area if you need a day off from the competition. An hour and a half to the east or three hours to the southeast, you will find Roswell and Carlsbad if you are interested in caves or aliens.

An hour to the southwest takes you to the magnificent White Sands National Monument. You

can easily see most of the park (the road part) in an hour, although two to three hours is a more leisurely pace.

There are some nice short, scenic walks. In the immediate vicinity of Ruidoso you will find some beautiful forested areas.

And you also have the Space Center in Alamogordo.

The weather will still be mild this time of year, but due to the elevation (close to 7,000 feet), you will want some warmer clothes for outdoors in the evening.

Make your plans now.

### NAP 2009/2010 Update



By Dale Sweetwood  
D17 NAP Coordinator

First, let me correct an error in my last article on the North American Pairs. The compensation for the second place finisher that attends the NAP finals at the NABC in Reno, should have been listed as \$300.

By the time you read this, the qualification period for the 2009/2010 NAP will be two thirds complete. Many of you will have already benefitted from the increased points you earned and from the fact that half of them are the much needed red points for

those of you who are not yet a Life Master.

For those of you who have already qualified for the district finals that will be held in Ruidoso October 9 and 10, you have successfully taken the first step towards winning a national competition. For those of you who have not yet qualified for the district finals, there is still time. You need to seek out the club games that are scheduled in August and earn your added points and qualification.

*Just a reminder:* the competition in the NAP is at three levels: A, B & C. There will be three winning pairs of a national title in Reno next spring. So do not despair if you are not an A player; you too can win a national event.

### Elections in District 17



By Karin Griffin

The following units in District 17 will be holding elections this fall for District Representative: Las Vegas Unit 373, New Mexico-at-Large, Tucson Unit 356, Phoenix Unit 354, Colorado-at-Large, Arizona-at-Large, Denver Unit 361 and El Paso Unit 159.

All persons wishing to run need to contact their unit prior to September 30, 2009 in order to have their name on the ballot.

Voting will take place in October and November via written

ballots which will be provided by the election secretary and returned to her no later than November 30, 2009.

The term of office is for two years beginning January 2010 and ending January 2012.

Candidates must be in good standing with the ACBL. This person may not be an owner of a bridge club and can not be receiving a remuneration on a regular basis from the ACBL.

At-Large candidates are not eligible if they belong to a unit where there is an existing District 17 Representative.

Contact me if you have any questions. - 505 797-1837 or by e-mail: [Nieve14@aol.com](mailto:Nieve14@aol.com)



### A Rocky Mountain Hi!

By John Van Ness  
District 17 President

In 2008 tournament bridge players spent almost \$2,500,000 on hotel rooms in District 17. Although a big chunk of that was players snapping up \$89 hotel rooms at the Las Vegas NABC last summer, this is a fact that those advocating down-sized and localized regionals in response to the recession might want to take into account. (In normal years, District 17 regionals and their players spend a mere 800,000 dollars a year on hotels.)

Attendance at District 17 regionals is, on average, 76% out-of-towners and for these players the hotel bill is by far the biggest expense of participating in a regional. It is essential that we pay particular attention to what our hotels are charging as "the bridge rate". With the recession people are paying more attention to their money and with the hotel market changing every day, a lot of people are shopping the Internet and often finding a better deal than the advertised bridge rate.

There's no doubt that regionals with better room rates are doing very well in these economic times. District 21 (middle California) still features \$86 room rates at DoubleTrees and Marriotts and attendance so far this year is up about 20%. District 17 bridge rates vary, but are almost always under \$100. So far this year our attendance is up a little here and down a little there. Some regionals (and NABCs) have gotten rather expensive. \$145 bridge rates, plus \$11 for Internet and about \$20 for parking is getting up there.

Some players are simply staying away from the more expensive tournaments, but others are finding much cheaper accommodations in the neighborhood or even at the same hotel. While most "first-class" brands (Hiltons, Marriotts, Hyatts) are holding the line on prices lest their image be tarnished, lesser brands such as La Quinta are pricing aggressively. When you're saving \$50 each night, maybe the convenience of staying at the host hotel isn't quite that important.

Then you have people staying at the host hotel who have found a price cheaper than the bridge rate at the same hotel. One technique is to wait until the last minute. If the hotel does not expect to be full you can occasionally get sensational rates. I got lucky at a recent regional and booked at \$28 rather than the \$79 bridge rate. This is a risky game, because you are just as likely to end up paying double or triple. This is especially true if the bridge rate is less than half the regular rate, which is often the case. Like my mama told me, you'd better shop around. (*Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, early 1960s*) But all this shopping doesn't help the tournament satisfy its room-night guarantee, and most contracts say that the tournament buys the unsold rooms.

(See Rocky on page 13)

### Phoenix Reminder

August 17-23, 2009



Sheraton Crescent Hotel

By Page Tomkinson

The Phoenix Desert Empire Regional will be held August 17-23 at the fabulous Sheraton Crescent Hotel in Phoenix. What a good location for all.

We know you like challenging bridge, but do you like all the fun and excitement that goes with it? If so, please join us for great bridge and the best hospitality in the southwest!

Check out [www.unit354.com](http://www.unit354.com) for further information.

### New Deadline for October ScoreCard

Attention unit publicity people: The deadline for the October issue of *ScoreCard* has been moved up from the normal September 5 deadline to August 25.

Please plan to have all ad copy and stories in by that date for the October issue of *ScoreCard*. Ad copy, e-mailed only, to the publisher (see right hand column, page two) with a copy to the editor and all stories (regular e-mail, no attachment) to the *ScoreCard* editor at [jaredjohnsonco@aol.com](mailto:jaredjohnsonco@aol.com)

Thank you for your help.

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