Corvallis Bridge Board Meeting
March 24, 2014  7pm

In Attendance:
Greg Smith       Rick Garvin
Mary Alice Seville  Bob Peery
Eileen Milligan     Joyce Dickerson
Becky McKenzie   Eric Larson
Eva Bodyfelt

Invited Guests from the Albany Bridge Board:
In Attendance:
Myrna Evans   Wanda Knight
Delores Clark Eileen Boal
Irva Kay Neyhart Sandy Allen
Sandra Krantz   Mitch Wilcox
Absent: Maureen Gosda

Invited Guests from the Unit Bridge Board
In Attendance:
Carol Harms  Ruby Miller
Mark Rowe     Frances Hewes
Walt Thies    Pat Moore
Ann Mills    (Bob Peery)
(Rick Garvin)
Absent: Stan Blascow

Invited Guests from the Eugene Bridge Club:
Don Marsh
Sherri Morgan

Greg called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Summary by Greg:

Greg proposes that the organizations responsible for the promotion of the game
of duplicate bridge in the Mid-Willamette Valley find a single facility where we can offer
most, if not all of our bridge games.

Everyone attending is here because they care about bridge in the Willamette
Valley. Greg and most of the club members are frustrated because we must rely on
other facilities for our space. Others call the shots and we have very little say in the
matter.

This idea basically started when the Albany Legion burned. We then moved to
the Methodist Church in Albany followed by the newly built Legion in Albany. They
were/are both less than perfect solutions. We feel the same in Corvallis with the Elks
and the Senior Center. Whenever some event happens at one of those locations, we cannot have our bridge game there because their event takes priority.

Greg’s primary reason for this change though is the inability for the Corvallis Bridge Club to offer educational opportunities. It is always touch and go for the bridge classes at the Senior Center right up to the start of the classes because they never know if they will have enough people to meet the requirement set by others outside of the bridge club. In addition, we have to pay a lot of money to have those classes in the Senior Center. The teachers running the classes also have to have background checks and give a lot of volunteer info. Basically, a lot of red tape. There are no opportunities to have a short session class when members request it.

Other clubs do this such as Vancouver, WA, which has a nice place in a strip mall and Beaverton, OR has a nice club they rent.

Summary of reasons to pursue this:
1) Scheduling
2) Organizational Restrictions
3) Limited ability to hold additional games
4) Noise levels
5) Educational Opportunities

What do we need in terms of space?
1) Easy Access
2) ~2000 square feet
3) Couple of bathrooms
4) Minimal build up cost
5) Good parking

Many spaces have been looked at and the best space for our group has been found in the former Albertson’s shopping center. It is in the former Jazzercise space. We hope to rent it for about $1/sq ft. Greg wants to allow Mary Vance to negotiate a lease for an amount of time that is reasonable for such endeavors.

Don Marsh

Eight years ago in Eugene there was an average of 22 tables/week. There were two separate clubs in Eugene. One owner passed away suddenly so John and Don bought it and created a private bridge club. The other club owner soon moved away from town and so they bought that club as well and formed one bridge club. For about a year, they offered games at two different sites. Then they found a space in Springfield for their club. Although they worried that people would not travel from Eugene to Springfield, they decided to go ahead with the new location and found that people were willing to drive there.

Now they get an average of 60 tables/week. Bridge in Eugene was transformed once they had their own place. Members were so grateful to have a clean, well-lit place with plenty of parking. Then they expanded but they kept their eye on the ultimate goal
of bridge. Don says they feel like they are just beginning with so much more on the horizon. There is something magical about having your own space. Ownership. They have a five and five lease. (They rent for 5 years with an option to rent for another 5 years.) Don says if they had it to do over again they would try to get a longer lease. Start-up cost was between $10k and $15k for tables, chairs, city code items, upgrades, etc. The total amount of money running the club that they spent last year was $33,000, including $2750/month for rent.

Lessons they have learned:
1) Acquire a long lease
2) Check with the city for any special requirements
3) Arrange Cleaning
4) Maintenance costs should be clearly defined between lessee and landlord
5) Liability Insurance to cover other use of the space
6) Utility costs continue to rise
7) Special assessments from the city

If they want to sublet their space, they would be covered but after a few tries, they decided it is too hard to sublet and their members did not want them to do it anyway. After seven years, they were forced to raise table fees from $5 to $6. Rising utility costs (all paid by the renter) which is one of the reasons they raised the fees. Their relationship with their Unit is wonderful. The Unit rents space from them once a month to hold a game and for their election party.

Rick proposed:

Have Mary Vance negotiate on our behalf for a contract on this space for the amount of time she thinks is reasonable. (hopefully more than 5 years)

Becky seconded the motion. All were in favor. 9-0.

**No other business to report or discuss at this time.**

Greg adjourned the meeting at 8:15pm.

Submitted by Eileen Milligan, 04/02/14. 12 pm