

2020 Annual Report

American Go Association

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Annual Report

Executive Summary

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a modest (under 10%) decline in the number of members and chapters, although we hope that the 2020 e-Go Congress may prompt some folks to renew their membership soon. With sufficient reserves to weather the pandemic, this decline is not troubling, although it does motivate the AGA to find new ways to reach go players.

In light of recent events, the AGA Code of Conduct Committee published a Statement on Injustice in June 2020, and the AGA is adding more resources to improve diversity by forming a committee to work with the Coordinator for Diversity and Inclusion.

The 2019 US Go Congress was a resounding success, with roughly 470 attendees overall. Although it was not possible to hold the 2020 US Go Congress in Estes Park, CO, the AGA has just launched the 2020 e-Go Congress, to be held August 1-9, 2020. This event should reach a new audience, while also appealing to long-time Congress attendees. Plans are also well underway for the 2021 US Go Congress at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH.

In September 2019, the AGA Board switched to a model wherein they meet 5-6 times per year (rather than monthly), and focus on specific topics, leading to greater efficiency and productivity. Since February 2020, board meetings have been open to AGA members who request to attend.

Broadcasting efforts have continued to grow, and will be an important aspect of the 2020 e-Go Congress. Between June 1, 2019 and July 5, 2020, the AGA's Twitch broadcasts reached 1.37 million unique viewers, and at one point had 13,102 concurrent viewers. The migration to a new web server was completed in May 2019, and the AGA has seen very few technical problems since then. The development team has been meeting monthly since late summer 2019.

The youth programs supported by the AGA have continued to grow. The preliminaries for the 2020 Redmond Cup and AGA Girls Cup are currently underway, although the finals will be postponed until the 2021 US Go Congress. The American Go Honor Society (a youth-run organization) has continued to run its usual tournaments, but is beginning to shift its focus to community and educational programs.

The AGA's archives are also getting increased attention, particularly with the award of a grant to allow us to digitize most of the materials to make them available to members online.

A Fair Play Commission was formed in early 2020 to address the problem of illicit AI assistance in online tournaments and events, as well as other issues of cheating and fair play.

The position of VP of Development was also created this year, and since late 2019 our volunteer has been seeking sponsors to help promote go in the US.

President's Report

The AGA's year 2019-2020 started well, with a successful and enjoyable Congress courtesy of longtime organizer Dave Weimer, and hosted in what I suspect is the most beautiful building a US Go Congress has ever had. With a busy tournament calendar, some excellent new volunteers joining our old hands, and some new programs to work on, it seemed that a good year was in store. Initiatives included supporting more local tournaments, trying to restart the New Jersey Open, and working with AGF to spread Go in schools.

And then, as in every other area of our lives, COVID-19 happened. While many of us enjoy online Go a lot, it is the case that we in the AGA are particularly about face-to-face Go, for its physical and tactile experience; for the tradition, for its social side; and in tournaments, for the fact that it brings a certain tension and visceral reality to the game. It is also the case that a face-to-face Go tournament, with dozens or hundreds of people in a room, hour after hour, day after day, sitting near each other sharing stones, boards, bowls, and clocks, is about as good a way to spread coronavirus as there is this side of a night club.

We advised our chapters to suspend meetings and, with great regret, cancelled the 2020 US Go Congress and asked the really incredible and devoted Colorado local organizing committee to work on having it another year. I commend their patience, understanding, and hard work, as well as the hard work put in by the many volunteers who have put together our informal 2020 e-Go Congress on such short notice.

With ample reserves and no payroll, the AGA is prepared to survive the lock-down resulting from the pandemic, but we want to do more than survive. Along with the e-Go Congress, we are working on other measures to bring AGA-specific Go activities and content to our members, our chapters, and the community at large. Please get in touch if you would like to help us do that.

Please stay safe.

- Andy Okun, President

Membership Status

As of the beginning of July, AGA had 1,859 individual members. This is a modest decline over the last 12 months. It would be reasonable to assume that some portion of the decline is attributable to the impact of the Coronavirus and its associated lockdowns. With four months of no face-to-face tournaments, which drive some new and renewed memberships, some drop off was to be expected. Of those 1,859, 163 are life members, sponsors account for 21 and sustainers for 66, and youth players for 422. At the same time, there has been a decline to 87 chapter memberships. Again, chapters aren't meeting or holding tournaments. Larger ones are renewing using chapter rewards points, but not all.

Chair's Report

Board Chair: Lisa Scott

Starting September 2019, the board switched from meeting 10-12 times per year to meeting 5-6 times per year. The change was made to allow for each meeting to have more of a big-picture focus, as has become industry standard. The change has also enabled the board to release agendas before each meeting, and to have more time to prepare to fully engage with the issues that come before the AGA.

Between June 2019 and June 2020, AGA Board meetings took place on:

1. Regular Meeting: [June 6, 2019](#)
2. Congress Meeting: [July 19, 2019](#) (at the 2019 US Go Congress in Madison, Wisconsin)
3. Fall Meeting: [September 8, 2020](#) (first meeting of the 2019-2020 term)
4. Annual Strategy "Retreat": [November 17, 2020](#)
5. Winter Meeting: [February 23, 2020](#)
6. Special Meeting: [April 15, 2020](#) (Discussion of plans for 2020 US Go Congress)
7. Spring Meeting: [May 17, 2020](#)
8. Extra Meeting: [June 28, 2020](#) [Link is to the agenda]

The minutes for all of these meetings can be found at <https://www.usgo.org/board-minutes>.

For the period 9/1/2018-8/31/2019, the AGA Board consisted of the following members:

Martin Lebl (Chair, Central Region Representative)
Lisa Scott (Central Region Representative)
Steve Colburn (Eastern Region Representative)
Gurujeet Khalsa (Eastern Region Representative)
Chris Kirschner (Western Region Representative)
Chris Saenz (Western Region Representative)
Paul Celmer (At-Large Representative)

For the period 9/1/2019-8/31/2020, the AGA Board consisted of the following members:

Lisa Scott (Chair, Central Region Representative)
Devin Frazee (Central Region Representative)
Dan Ritter (Eastern Region Representative)
Gurujeet Khalsa (Eastern Region Representative)
Chris Kirschner (Western Region Representative)
Chris Saenz (Western Region Representative)
Paul Celmer (At-Large Representative)

Over the course of the year, the AGA board took a number of actions. The highlights of the meetings are listed below, along with links to approved policy documents (which are in the [Appendix](#) of the Annual Report). Although many of the topics below were introduced in earlier meetings, they have only been included if there was a formal motion made on the topic.

Since 6/1/2019, the AGA Board has:

- Approved a change to how often the Board meetings and how it structures those meetings. (6/6/2019)
- Approved the [budget for FY 2019-2020](#). (6/6/2019)

- Directed the president, at his discretion, to spend up to \$2,000 to support restarting the NJ Open. The board also required that the policy established for the NJ Open be published and the conditions justifying it be published and the conditions for similar application also be published. (9/8/2019)
- Approved the creation of a policy that would establish conditions for AGA support of tournaments. Devin Frazee, Chris Kirschner, and Dan Ritter formed a committee to create this policy. (9/8/2019)
- Expressed concern at the report about the most recent US Open Masters and would like the president to explore additional options and present those at the next board meeting.
- Doubled the sigma expansion rate for ratings (9/8/2019)
- Authorized the president to revise the single event membership to resolve the issues related to timing and duration of the event. (9/8/2019)
- Authorized the president to create complimentary memberships for foreign nationals on the day of a tournament. (9/8/2019)

- Authorized a committee to create a system for the AGA to provide limited financial support to develop/maintain tournaments (11/17/2019)
- Established the [Congress Scholarship Fund](#) to make US Go Congress more affordable (11/17/2019)
- Approval of the formation of the [North American Go Federation](#). (draft on 11/17/2019 and final on 2/23/2020)

- Opened meetings for observation by members. (2/23/2020)
- Instructed the president to submit a new format for the North American Masters Tournament to the Board by March 15 [pre-empted by Covid-19]. (2/23/2020)
- Approved the [Tour Operator Policy](#) initially on the agenda for the November meeting. (2/23/2020)
- Approved the reappointment of current VPs up for reappointment. (2/23/2020)
- Instructed the president to create a commission to create and oversee the National Go Teacher Program, in coordination with the AGF. (2/23/2020)
- Approved the [Tournament Support Program](#), with modified language regarding one administrative aspect. (2/23/2020)

- Approved hiring an accounting service to handle AGA financials, spending up to \$15,000 per year. (2/23/2020)
- Discouraged all in-person go play in March and April 2020 ([Official Statement 3/14/2020](#))
- Canceled the 2020 US Go Congress ([Official Statement 4/17/2020](#))
- Approved the [budget for FY 2020-2021](#) (5/17/2020)
- Approved efforts to create a virtual “mini-congress” (5/17/2020)
- Instructed the president to prepare a thorough annual report and deliver it to the board, chapters, and membership in advance of the August meetings. (5/17/2020)
- Asked the president to propose to the board a general schedule for the AGA's business meetings, usually held at the US Go Congress. (5/17/2020)
- Moved to notify the chapters that the General Assembly in 2020 will consider changes to the existing membership types and fee structure (including possibly increasing membership fees). The board instructed the president to prepare one or more proposals. (5/17/2020)
- Reviewed a proposal for a go map application (5/17/2020)
- Decided to create a running list of ideas to make in-person go safer, or find alternative methods of play. The board decided to solicit input from the membership. (5/17/2020)
- Continued the [recommendation for clubs concerning in-person play](#) (6/6/2020)

Note that in the above list, information updates likely to be included in other parts of the Annual Report, such as those regarding international tournaments or changes in personnel, have been left out of the Chair's Report.

Treasurer's Report

Overview

In late 2019, Daniel Daehyuk Ko completed his term as treasurer for the AGA, having done the work with exceptional patience and diligence and submitted properly filled out 990s to the Internal Revenue Service on behalf of the Association. In seeking a new treasurer, and managing the treasurer's workload in the interim, it became apparent to the Board and President that it was going to be a hard post for which to secure a volunteer. A large number of transactions, including annual joins and renewals for a membership of more than 2,000, payments and 1099s for competitors and independent contractors, and increasing complexity in the necessary tax filings, mean that the treasurer has either to do many, many hours of work or manage other volunteers to do those tasks. After a search led by Board Chair Lisa Scott, we identified a company, Jitasa, that specializes in providing bookkeeping services and accounting for small and medium sized nonprofits at reasonable cost. In the spring, we contracted with Jitasa and have nearly completed the on-boarding process.

At the time this report was due, staff and Jitasa had not completed the 2019-2020 financials. It is hoped they can be distributed at the time of the General Assembly. What follows is an informal summary of the year just past and an assessment of the financial condition of the AGA.

Financial Status Report

The board and staff have continued to gingerly raise the level of spending on programs to benefit the members, continuing the state championships program and the chapter rewards program, and developing a new tournament support program to provide cash incentives to chapters to hold more tournaments. In addition, we have been spending more on video and streaming content and equipment. In addition, when Coronavirus hit, we were working on restarting the pro qualification tournament, inaugurating a professional championship, and reworking the Congress tournaments in an effort to have a North American pro-am championship. The discretionary budget of the organization, including those new spending items, is about \$85,000 this year, with a significant spending of reserves as part of it, up from \$60,000 some years ago. Nonetheless, with a successful Congress in Madison WI in 2019, and programs that perhaps were too ginger in scope, we have increased our reserves again. We have about \$640,000 in reserves, of which less than a third is due in long-term escrow and membership liabilities.

The AGA has therefore sufficient funds to continue its operations for a considerable period, and has reserves that would enable it to weather an interruption in membership revenue.

2020-2021 Budget

The budget is contained in the appendix, [here](#).

VP Reports

Planning

VP for Planning: Chris Kirschner

Planning is a role that strives to help integrate new program development with existing systems. Plaudits to those doing the real work. In the last year, we have been working on three developments: Ranking, State Championships, and Tournament support. In the last month the Code of Conduct committee released a “Statement on Injustice”.

The Rank Certification Program is ready to roll in terms of calculation, and is in the process of integrating the system with the primary AGA data management system. We hope to implement this in this calendar year.

The State Championship Program was instituted in 2018 as a test project, and several states have run successful events. Due to Covid-19, none are scheduled for this year so far, but if restrictions are lifted, there are eager states ready to run them.

The Tournament Support Program (intended to subsidize major tournaments) was authorized late 2019 and was prepared for deployment in March; the program is currently held in abeyance due to the AGA’s policy discouraging face to face competition.

The AGA’s “Statement on injustice” indicated that we would actively investigate our organizational policy and practice in order to more actively support the inclusion of people of all cultures and ethnicities. We are forming a committee that has the authority to act to encourage more diversity among AGA volunteers, members, and competitors.

International Activities

VP for International Affairs: Thomas Hsiang

Asst. for International Affairs: Hajin Lee

For the period of 6/2019 to 5/2020, several international Go championships were held:

1. The World Amateur Go Championship celebrated its 40th anniversary.
2. The International Pair-Go Championship celebrated its 30th anniversary.
3. The inaugural IMSA Masters event, financed by the Alibaba Group, was held in Hengshui, China.
4. The International AI Championship was held for the third time in China.
5. Several other international professional championships – LG Cup, Chunlan Cup, Bailing Cup, and Wu Qingyuan Cup (women) – were held in 2019.

2020 had promised to be a special year for Go, in conjunction with the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics. A number of events were planned:

1. The WAGC was to be held in Vladivostok, on eastern end of Siberia, for the first time.
2. An inaugural World Amateur Women's Championship was planned in Tokyo.
3. The gala Pair Go World Cup and the Ing Cup (both quadrennial events) would return for the second time.
4. International professional championships – Mlily Cup, Samsung Cup, Wu Qingyuan Cup – were scheduled.
5. The IMSA Masters would return for its second version.
6. The quadrennial World Mind Sport Games was planned in Qingdao, China.

The pandemic forced the cancellation of all 2020 events. Most of them, fortunately, have been rescheduled for 2021.

Separately, the International Go Federation made a special pitch in 2018 to make Go a recognized Olympic sport. This was delayed due to the reorganization of the IOC. New guidelines and procedures are planned for release in 2020-21; the IGF effort will resume efforts for IOC recognition afterwards.

Regionally, the American and the Canadian Go Associations collaborated to form the new North American Go Federation. Initially, the NAGF will have the responsibility of organizing all North American professional competitions, qualification exams, and promotion, in addition to selecting North American representatives to international tournaments. It is also expected that NAGF will join the IGF as an associate member and may include other countries in the future.

Communications

VP for Communications: Chris Garlock

Website

Report by Steve Colburn

The AGA website has not had many visible changes over the years. However, as we have said in past reports, there has been a lot going on behind the scenes. We have more than a few volunteers to thank for this.

The main website for the AGA, usgo.org, continues to run on Drupal with Wordpress for the E-Journal/News section of the website. Both continue to work well for our workflows and user base. We have been working to make sure that these services remain more stable and easier to update than in the past. This is also true for much of the software that runs our website.

We have found two new editors to assist with updating our pages. They have been working to update, organize, and enhance the content on the website. This has been requested by our users and is a task that needed to be done.

Major steps have been taken to reduce duplications of information. Particular effort has gone into enhancing the AGAGD. Through the AGA Chapters List, we recently informed the AGA Chapters that we are replacing the pages at <https://www.usgo.org/ratings> with <https://agagd.usgo.org>. We have taken advice from users and other applications, which has resulted in more information within the app and more robust information being displayed. This project has also had the most interest from programmers who want to help.

Issues with the Membership Manager began right before the 2018 US Go Congress. Through the work of a few volunteers, we were able to stand up a new server in 2019, and fully migrate all of the code and settings by May 2019 – a process that involved half of the organization's technical side. Since then, we have only had one major issue with the system, and many members and chapters have joined the AGA or renewed their membership. This system is running smoothly and will receive more attention in the coming year.

A major addition to the development of the website has been adding Ansible deployments. This reduces time needed to deploy code and gives the organization an easy and quick way to update our sites – significantly reducing the amount of time needed not only for regular updates, but also for massive updates and migrations, such as that undertaken in 2018-2019.

In the past year, we have added a test server to deploy code and an app server for new applications. Our test server has allowed us to test new looks for the site and make sure things work before they hit the main site. The app server also hosts the aghs.cc website, Frank Lam's HTML5 Way to Go app (<https://wtg.usgo.org>), and our archivist application, Collective Access.

Collective Access will allow some of our archives to be available to our members around the world in digital form.

We are always looking for more help. We need to upgrade our Drupal install and are looking for a couple of people to help us. This will drive a number of upgrades to our site in the future.

Broadcasting

Executive Producer: Stephen Hu

In the past 12 months, AGA's broadcasting operations mainly took place on [the official AGA Twitch channel](#), which remains one of the largest content hubs for Go in the Western hemisphere. Between June 1, 2019 and July 5, 2020, we streamed a total of 136 hours and 18 minutes on Twitch; this resulted in **1.37 million unique viewers** tuning into our broadcasts. Among the crowds, 1,910 joined in conversations in the Twitch chat, and 2,612 followed our channel. Thanks to friendly collaborations with Twitch Esports, we were able to promote our marquee events on the front page carousel, at one point gaining **13,102 concurrent viewers**.

100% of our broadcast recordings are made available on the official AGA YouTube channel. Our on-site and remote coverage included the:

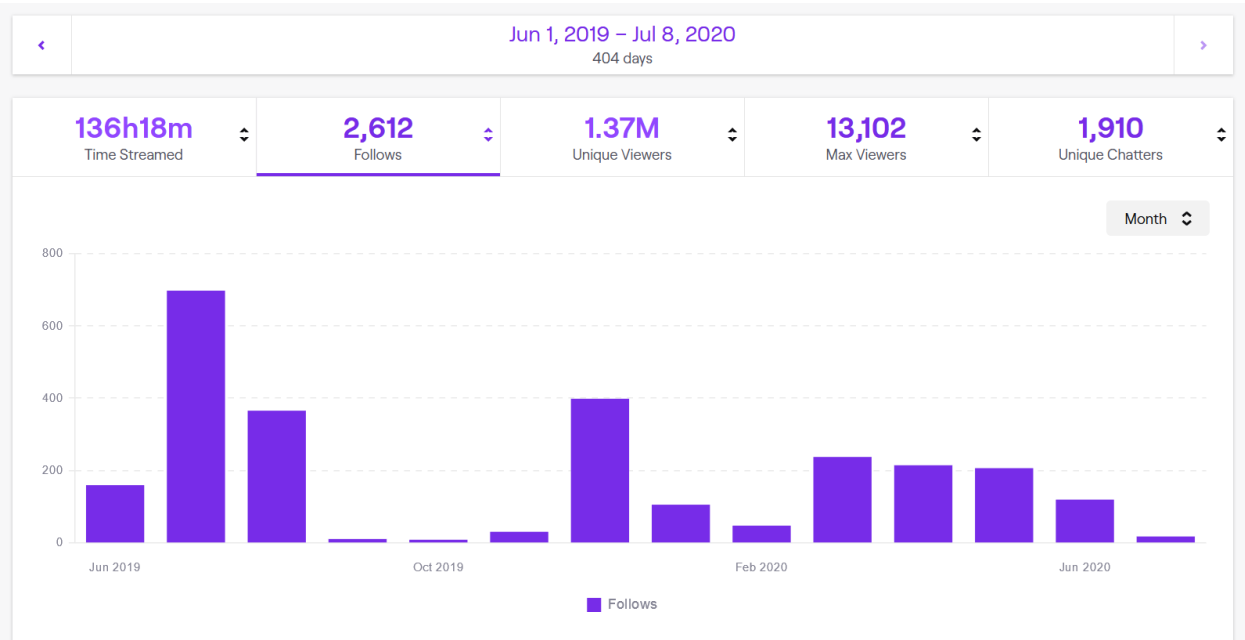
- 2019 Transatlantic Professional Go Team Championship (KGS+OGS)
- 2019 U.S. Go Congress (Madison, WI)
- 2019 China Securities Cup World AI Weiqi Open (Shandong, China)
- 2019 Cotsen Open (Los Angeles, CA)
- 2019 Southeast Asia Go Congress (Singapore)
- 2020 China-US Internet Go Tournament (Fox)
- Weekly professional game commentaries with Michael Redmond 9p

While we look back on 2019-2020 with great pride, our efforts to grow the broadcasting team and increase the variety of AGA video content will undoubtedly continue. As of this writing, our largest ongoing project involves providing full coverage of the 2020 e-Go Congress. This is the first time an AGA Congress event is being held entirely online; therefore, we will be preparing a large collection of pre-recorded and live content, with help from our professional friends, core AGA organizers, and volunteers from the Go community at large.

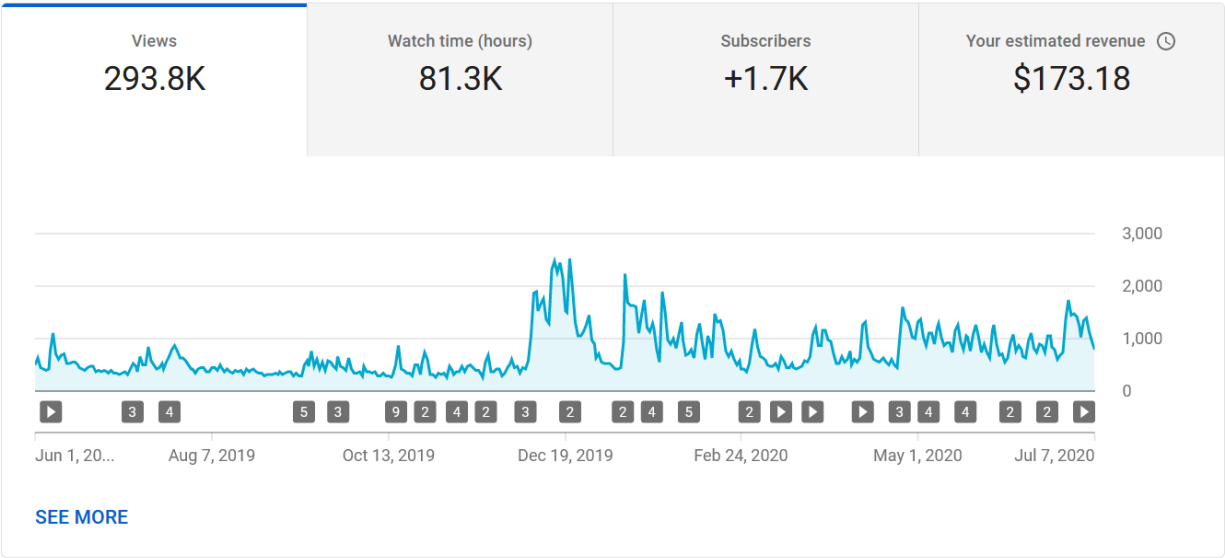
Due to the lasting impact of COVID-19, most of our projects will be staying online for the foreseeable future. We plan to accomplish the following in the next 12 months:

- Maintain our ongoing, long-term relationship with Twitch Esports and promote more events on the front page
- Recruit more line producers, video editors and other broadcasting-related talent
- Design an event calendar of multiple broadcasts and video releases per week

- Experiment with new content formats, such as collaboration with the chess community
- Focus on the establishment of “home studios” for remote production, while preparing a return to in-person operations if conditions permit



Overview: Twitch analytics, June 2019 - July 2020



Overview: YouTube analytics, June 2019 - July 2020

Operations

VP for Operations: Andrew Jackson

IT/Infrastructure

Report by Steve Colburn

2019-2020 has been a great year for the AGA's Infrastructure. There has not just been an increase in volunteers, but we have also had contributions from many places. The sense of community has also been increased through regular developer meetings.

The Developer team started meeting just before Go Congress in 2019, And regular meetings began in earnest in September 2019. Since October, the minutes of the meetings have been posted on the AGA Website (<https://www.usgo.org/dev-meeting-minutes>). These meetings have increased the camaraderie among the developers, and made it easier for us to communicate and explore different ways to approach issues. Over time, these meetings have grown our team and let others know what is going on.

The AGA runs multiple servers in its infrastructure. The main server runs most operations for the organization. Some details about it can be found within the Webmaster Report. In the past two years, these servers have been either upgraded or added as our needs have increased. The addition of a Test Server has been a huge boon, so now we can make sure that new code works properly. A new server has been started that hosts smaller single apps, like the aghs.cc website, HTML5 Way to Go app, and an Archives app.

The largest addition to our success in the last year, outside of our volunteers, has been the addition of Ansible and Docker. One at a time, our hosted apps have had their configurations and deployments added to our Ansible code. This allows us to make changes and deploy sites within minutes instead of hours, and makes it easier for new volunteers to see their code published. We have a new docker expert who is looking at and tweaking our configurations to allow the apps to run better.

Most of the work right now has been behind the scenes. There are a large number of big fixes and issues in our github pages (<https://github.com/usgo/>). Movement on these has been slow but steady. These issues have started to be discussed come up during the Development Meetings, which has helped the projects gain momentum among people who are interested in working on them.

We have worked with the Volunteer Coordinator to post new positions and needs on the website, in addition to updates posted to the E-Journal and Chapters List. The Chapters List has provided some good feedback on how we can improve. We are always looking for help,

particularly from those who work in PHP. We have a few apps that can help with those skills. We will be working with the Volunteer Coordinator to document the skills needed for projects, to help secure needed volunteers. We hope to work with the Ratings Officer in the future to help with the needs of the ratings system.

Development

VP for Development: Stephanie Yin

In 2019, Stephanie Yin 1p took on the role of VP Development for the AGA. Working with Andy Okun and other senior staff, she will be looking for opportunities to cultivate sponsors, institutions, and individuals, to support AGA activities. The AGA continues to receive generous support and cooperation from the Chinese Weiqi Association (CWA), the Nihon Kiin, and the Korea Baduk Association. In addition, The AGA continued to receive generous support from Pandanet for the Pandanet City League, now in its eighth year, and from the World Pair Go Association for pair go.

During 2019, the CWA outlined an ambitious program to promote Go around the world and in November, the CWA President, Lin Jianchao, expressed interest in promoting Go in the US with the financial support of the Chinese government. Because of Covid-19, potential sponsorships and cooperation have been delayed. Despite this, the first China-US Internet Go Friendship Match took place in April 2020 and received a positive reception in both China and the US. The CWA is also planning to promote attendance at the US Go Congress within the youth Go community in China, and a youth exchange program is under discussion. Following up with these sponsorships and cooperation will be the priority of AGA development.

The AGA continues to seek corporate sponsors, but one potential sponsorship being discussed during the year has also been delayed by Covid-19.

Coordinator Reports

Congress

Coordinator: Lisa Scott

Before the Covid-19 Pandemic, the US Go Congress had taken place every year since 1985 – and we expect for it to resume in 2021, assuming health and safety conditions allow.

Results of 2019 Congress

The 2019 Congress was a resounding success. We had attendance of 470 people, well above the average for the region over the last 10 years, and a little above the overall average for the last dozen years of 457 attendees (including the 2019 Congress).

2019 Registration Fast Facts:

- Strength
 - 20 professionals
 - 173 dan players
 - 232 kyu players
 - 43 non-players by rank (an additional 37 go players were staff or non-players)
- Age
 - 139 people age 55+
 - 108 people age 35-54
 - 125 people age 18-34
 - 98 people age 17 and under
- Gender
 - 124 females
 - 42 non-participants
 - 82 players or pros
 - 318 males
 - 19 non-participants
 - 318 players or pros
 - 9 folk who did not provide gender

Because the 2019 US Go Congress had attendance 25% above the regional average, the Congress once again had a healthy surplus of around \$40,000, which has been roughly the surplus range since 2017.

During meetings at the 2019 US Go Congress, multiple people expressed interest in providing new kinds of support for Congress attendees, and in giving people more opportunities to donate to allow people to attend Congress (and to support other AGA and AGF activities). Given this interest and the fact that congresses for the past few years had accumulated substantial surpluses, the Congress Coordinator and the AGA President moved to create a Congress Scholarship Fund. Although implementation of the program will wait until the 2021 Congress, the AGA now has a direct way to make it easier for more people to attend the US Go Congress.

2020 Congress – Cancellation of Estes Park

The 2020 US Go Congress was scheduled to be in Estes Park, CO. More than that, the event was well planned, registration was open, and nearly 150 people had registered – before the Covid-19 Pandemic hit the US. After the AGA Board decided on April 15 to cancel the 2020 US Go Congress, in consultation with the directors of the 2020 US Go Congress (Eric Wainwright, Howard Landman, and Paul Barchilon), refunds were issued to participants within two weeks.

The current plan is to move the arrangements made for the 2020 US Go Congress to 2022, with the expectation that it will be possible to hold large, in-person events at that time. With this plan, the excellent work that the Estes Park organizers have done will not be wasted, and the US Go Congress attendees will get to experience the beauty and fun of having a Congress in Estes Park.

2020 e-Go Congress

Because we couldn't hold an in-person Congress this year, the AGA decided to hold a "mini-congress," the 2020 e-Go Congress. This event does not include as many tournaments or teaching events as the normal congress does. However, it serves multiple purposes, most of which are designed to simultaneously benefit go players and raise the profile of the AGA:

- It gives folks who haven't been able to attend Congress (rather because of the cost, the time, or any other reason) the chance to participate in a week of go activities. This is great for these people, and also great for expanding the services that the AGA is able to offer to our members and potential members.
- It gives folks who usually attend Congress the chance to participate in some events, even if it is just a "taste" of what they would normally experience in person.
- It is giving the AGA the opportunity to craft a well-curated schedule of daily broadcasts, designed to appeal to a number of new and old audiences.
- It is allowing the AGA to experiment with new tournaments, for which there is limited time given the packed schedule of regular congress events. These include:
 - A tournament for double-digit kyu players
 - Beginner teaching sessions (not something people willing to pay for Congress are likely to want or need)
 - A multi-round, multi-day "Blitz" tournament.

While this report has been compiled before the e-Go Congress, the General Assembly meeting is happening after the closing ceremonies of the event, so we'll know by then how it's gone!

2021 Cleveland Go Congress

The AGA is moving ahead with plans for an in-person Congress in 2021. As long as health and safety conditions allow, the Congress is expected to take place at Case Western Reserve University in the heart of Cleveland, OH. The location is reminiscent of the central location the 2019 Congress had in Madison, and should provide plenty of alternative activities for non-players, and well as for players who want to check out all of the museums, restaurants, and other attractions that Cleveland has to offer.

Future Congresses

At the 2019 US Go Congress, organizers from all over the country, at least half a dozen, expressed interest in running congresses. The AGA looks forward to drawing upon this growing interest to be able to plan congresses more than two years in the future (and to confirm congresses at least two years in the future), and to otherwise improve the organization of the congress and the experience that it offers to attendees.

If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering for or running a US Go Congress, please contact the Congress Coordinator, Lisa Scott, at lisa.scott@gocongress.org.

Archivist

Archivist: Karoline Li

In this fiscal year, the AGA was able to secure a grant of \$7,000 from the Iwamoto North America Foundation for Go, which will be used to purchase digitization equipment and software, and pay other costs of processing, housing, and making available to members and to the public documents from the AGA's rich repository of American Go historical material. Among the documents to be processed first are the papers of former AGA President Barbara Calhoun. The AGA's IT volunteers have set up Collective Access software on our new servers, which will serve to manage our archives as they are processed and digitized, and will eventually be the platform from which the public can access and search the archives. Configuration is underway.

Professionals

Coordinator: Hajin Lee

The year in professional matters began with the final match of the Transatlantic Professional Go Team Championship. Unfortunately, a second edition of the championship has not yet been scheduled due to lack of sponsorship.

Meanwhile, work had begun on resuming the professional qualification tournament, and also on creating a North American professional championship tournament that would not take place at the US Go Congress. Both efforts are on hold due to Covid-19.

In the meantime, the AGA and the Canadian Go Association formed a joint venture organization, the North American Go Federation, with a view to having a unified identity in matters where Go in North America as a whole is involved. It is anticipated that the AGA professional system, which from the start included Canada and has been co-run by the CGA, would come under the aegis of the NAGF. Four board members have already been selected and an inaugural board meeting is expected to take place soon.

Chapter Services

Coordinator: Bob Gilman

The base responsibility of Chapter Services is administration of the Chapter Rewards Program. Chapters accumulate points both from the number of AGA members affiliated with the chapter, and rated games played by those members. Points may be redeemed for expenses incurred in support of the chapter's go activities. A [full explanation of the rewards program](#) is available on the AGA web site along with a [listing of chapter reward point balances](#).

During the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, 17 chapters redeemed points valued at \$6,492. Seven chapters accounted for 95% of these redemptions. 32% of redemptions occurred in the first two quarters, while 2% occurred in the last quarter. I believe the program has shown itself valuable in supporting the activities of larger chapters and has also provided some incidental support to smaller chapters. A reminder of the program in the e-Journal might perhaps spur greater usage.

Diversity and Inclusion

Coordinator: Lisa Scott

The Coordinator for Diversity and Inclusion was deeply involved in the creation of the AGA Code of Conduct 2015-2018, after which the Code of Conduct Committee took over that initiative.

In the aftermath following the murder of George Floyd, the Coordinator for Diversity and Inclusion supported the Code of Conduct Committee's efforts to issue a [Statement on Injustice](#). After this issuance of this statement, the AGA Board voted to create a Committee on Diversity and Inclusion.

Although this committee's work is in its infancy, the committee has the AGA Board's support to pursue a number of initiatives, particularly:

1. Outreach to underrepresented communities generally (adults as well).
2. Outreach to schools and libraries in underrepresented communities.
3. Creating a pipeline to encourage more players from underrepresented communities to play and stay with the game.
4. Reaching out to the Chess community for ideas.

Additional committee members are sought, and interested people should contact the Coordinator for Diversity and Inclusion at lisa.scott@usgo.org.

Elections

Coordinator: Arnold Eudell

The AGA conducts annual elections to fill board positions. In 2019, three positions were up for reelection. Chris Kirshner ran unopposed for the Western region, while Steve Colburn (incumbent) and Dan Ritter were in competition for the Eastern region, and Devin Frazee and Ashish Varma both challenged Martin Lebl (incumbent) for the Central Region. Chris Kirshner, Dan Ritter, and Devin Frazee won their respective races.

For the 2020 election, four positions are being voted upon. Lisa Scott and Chris Saenz are running unopposed for the Central and Western regions, respectively. Justin Teng and Stephanie Yin compete for the Eastern region seat, while Ted Terpstra, Darrell Ashworth, and Ashish Varma compete for the At-Large seat. Results will be announced by the second week of August.

Youth

Youth Coordinator: Justin Teng

Note: This report does not include projects/accomplishments concerning the promotional/educational side of youth Go and will only cover the competitive side, along with an update on American Go Honor Society activities.

The 2019 Redmond Cup had 36 competitors (23 Senior, 13 Junior), which was about 50% more than the field in 2018 and the largest field we have had over the last five years. The Congress broadcast program was reduced compared to previous years, and as a result there was no Redmond Cup video broadcast for the Finals. The games themselves were still broadcast over KGS. Resources permitting, it would be nice for the Redmond Cup live video broadcast to resume at the next US Go Congress. In 2019, the AGA Girls Cup was in its second year, and saw a significant increase in players—the field more than doubled from 9 players to 19 players. This was a strong sign of an increase in female youth players.

The registration schedule for the 2020 series of tournaments (North American Kyu Championships (NAKC), Redmond Cup, AGA Girls Cup) was altered slightly to give people more time to register, with all three tournaments opening for registration at the same time at the beginning of January, rather than Redmond/AGA Girls Cup opening in mid-February. This will continue to be the plan going forward.

The 2020 NAKC had about the same number of participants as in 2019 (87 and 85, respectively), which is the highest to date. The increase in participation over the past few years can likely be attributed to the New York Institute of Go, which teaches many youth classes.

The 2020 Redmond Cup and AGA Girls Cup preliminary tournaments are in progress as of May 2020, with roughly the same number of participants as their respective 2019 editions. While COVID-19 has not affected the preliminary tournaments because they are online, the finals will be postponed until the next US Go Congress. Currently, we are planning with the assumption that the 2021 US Go Congress will take place, and have not yet made contingency plans for if that ends up not being the case. These tournaments will continue to be run annually, and there are currently no concrete plans to organize additional tournaments on a national scale.

The American Go Honor Society (the AGHS, a youth-run organization that organizes several events and activities per year for youth players) ran its usual Young Lions Tournament in December 2019 and School Team Tournament in April 2020. Additionally, the AGHS started a monthly Youth League and a weekly Go problems contest (not limited to youth players), which have had positive responses. While there are no concrete plans for next year, the general consensus among the current youth officers is that given the increase in resources needed to organize and run large online tournaments due to the increasing ease of access to superhuman AI programs, the focus of the AGHS should be shifted more towards community activities (like the weekly Go problems) and potentially toward educational content creation.

Ratings

Coordinator: Andrew Jackson

The AGA's role as a central ratings authority has largely come to a standstill with the arrival of COVID-19. Unsurprisingly, in-person go tournaments have stopped, and with them ratings for in-person tournaments. No tournaments have been submitted for rating since March 11th.

The good news is that this provides an opportunity for us to revamp our ratings system, potentially to enable streamlined tournament administration, and hopefully to enable a quicker turnaround time between tournament completion and updated ratings.

Day-to-day administration of the existing ratings system will be handed off to Robert Qi in mid July.

Volunteer

Coordinator: Steve Colburn

2019-2020 has been a good year for the AGA in terms of finding new volunteers. The position of Volunteer Coordinator had been empty for the past few years, but in the past year or so, I have taken the task on, particularly to help find volunteers for projects with the web team. This has been helpful in attracting people for more projects and tasks throughout the organization.

In the process of looking for volunteers for the Web Team projects, I was contacted about other open positions. We have sent out requests for a Treasurer, various officers, and many programmers. The organization has pivoted a bit on the Treasurer position and has hired a company to assist with these tasks. We have also been interviewing and talking with potential new ratings offers to take over that role. We hope to have a new volunteer in that role and then expand it. Some of these jobs can be found on the new "Get Involved!" page on our website (<https://www.usgo.org/aga-volunteer-positions>).

Over the past decade, more and more of our organization has moved to a digital means of communication. With our ever expanding needs, we have also needed and found many programmers. Unfortunately, over time many of these volunteers have had to step back due to various life events. With the renewed visibility of our postings, we have gained a good group of contributing programmers. Additionally, the Web Team has been holding regular development meetings to check in and discuss updates and new projects and issues.

The goal for 2020-2021 is to increase our volunteer numbers by another 10 sustained volunteers. We always have some turn over, and I anticipate that some positions will be filled with new volunteers. I hope to work with the President and many volunteers to help draft updated job descriptions for all positions. With these descriptions, we can better onboard new volunteers into their roles. This has been shown to be the best method to help recruit new volunteers. I will also be asking our volunteers for their thoughts on how best to keep people in volunteer roles.

Committee Reports

Code of Conduct

Committee Chair: Lisa Scott

The Code of Conduct Committee was formed in summer 2018, following approval by the AGA Board of the AGA Code of Conduct, which can be found on [the AGA website](#). At the 2018 US Go Congress, the AGA held multiple training sessions to help folks understand how they could be better allies, and help create a more welcoming and equitable community.

The Code of Conduct Committee has, fortunately, not been called upon to take an active role over the past two years. The Code of Conduct Committee's primary function is in adjudicating violations of the Code of Conduct, or in otherwise facilitating the implementation of the Code of Conduct. Since no violations have been brought before the Committee, there has not been much need to act. The Committee welcomes all reports of inappropriate action, whether or not sanctions are ultimately required.

The Code of Conduct Committee did address issues surrounding equity and injustice following the murder of George Floyd (at the end of the period covered by the Annual Report). Although the Code of Conduct Committee is designed primarily to focus on actions, reporting, and sanctions, it did issue a [Statement on Injustice](#) on June 17, 2020. Thereafter, the AGA Board voted to create a Committee on Diversity and Inclusion.

Fair Play Commission

Committee Chair: Josh Lee

The AGA Fair Play Committee was formed to deal with the issue of illicit AI assistance in online tournaments and events, as well as other issues of cheating and fair play that may arise. In the age of COVID-19, being able to play online events without fear of AI is increasingly important. While no solution can wholly prevent AI assistance, the Fair Play Committee is in the process of drafting two products to assist the AGA in reducing its use. These are (1) a computer program to assist TDs in detecting possible AI use (currently in testing), and (2) a document of principles and guidelines that will help form AGA policy more broadly, while also assisting TDs in protecting the integrity of events with minimum disruption.

Appendix

Draft Minutes of 2018 General Assembly

This draft will be updated to the final version upon approval by the General Assembly

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Motions Passed

1. Motion requiring AGA leadership to send legislation on technology-related cheating to chapters to review prior to final version approved.
2. A motion was introduced to create a committee to investigate the US Open pairing policies. The president agreed to do so without a vote on the motion.
3. Madison, WI approved as the 2019 Go Congress location.

Call to Order and Quorum

Andy Okun, President, calls the meeting to order on 7/28/2018.

28.11% of chapters are represented. Quorum is present so the meeting can continue.
Eventually, 40% of chapter votes are present.

Roll Call

List of Those Present

Andrew Okun- [AGA President, Chair] Santa Monica Go Club
Nick Wilmes- Seattle AGA Chapter & Ghost of Seattle
Jim Hlavka- Silly Valley
Martin Lebl-Tuscon Go Club & Arizona Club Proxy
Mark Rubenstein- Evanston Go Club
Willard Haynes- Davis/Sacramento Go Club
Paul Ohmart- Olympia Go Club
Bart Jacobs- Austin Go Club
Howard Landman- Fort Collins Go Club
Barbara Calhoun- Brooklyn Go Club & Western Mass Go Association Proxy
Dave Weimer- University of Wisconsin Go Club [Not voting representative]
Terri Schurter- Wings across Calm Water Go Club
Gary Smith- NOVA Go Club
Gurjeet- National Go Center, GWGC & XYZ proxies
Lee Schumacher- Western Region Go Club at Google
Pete Schumer- Vermont Go Club
Samantha Fede- Proxy for Empty Sky Go Club
Chris Kirschner [AGA board member]
Lisa Scott [AGA board member]

Arrived Later

Vivi Truong [not chapter rep]
William Gundberg- Arizona club, takes proxy from Martin Lebl
Benjamin Coplon- Penn Go Society
Ted Terpstra- San Diego Go Club

1. Approve 2017 Chapter Assembly Minutes

Lebl moves to approve 2017 Chapter Assembly minutes, Khalsa seconds. 3 abstentions (**Landham, Kirschner, Hvlaka**), otherwise unanimous. **2017 Chapter Assembly minutes approved.**

2. Summary of AGA Board of Director Activities

Summary of board activities from **Martin Lebl** (AGA board chair).

3. President's Report

Given by AGA President, **Andy Okun**

- *Static Membership*-- approximately 2021 members. There are 146 life members, which is an increase. It is cheering to have more people join as life members.
- *Financial Report*-- Total cash in the bank is just over \$600,000. A little over \$200,000 held in long-term liability. Some additional money for organizations that have hosted congresses to be pulled for activities consistent with the organization's mission. \$90,000 from Google to be spent on a professional tournament. We are spending more money on strong players rather than anyone else, partially because we need to deliver on the professional system, and partially as prize money for the Masters tournament. \$6700 has gone back to chapters through the chapter reward system. There's been growth this year, but we have \$15k per year available so there's still room for growth.

Rubenstein: Is there a way to know what the chapter rewards are used for?

Khalsa: Currently not, but I'll try to do that.

Haynes: Do we get warning if the reward points are about to expire?

Khalsa: No, but we haven't expired any points so far. Our rule is that they can expire if you haven't used points in 2 years. We'll notify people if points are going to expire. There's also a bucket of reward points that can be used for state championships.

Okun (*Financial Report, cont.*): We will continue with the broadcasts, because it seems like the community is benefiting from them. This is an expenditure. Last year we had a surplus of 11k, partially because we had a congress surplus. We can afford to spend a little more each year. We are also starting to invest. The budget that the board approved yesterday has an increase in order to have pro tournaments and qualifications. Pro qualifications have been on hiatus since Myungwan Kim left. We tried to get the same sponsor as the European Go Association, but that fell through

Schumer: How many American pros are there right now? [There are 5.] It would be nice to have their information and bios on the website.

Okun (*Financial Report, cont.*): We made money this year on broadcasting (\$600), but that is less than expenses.

- International Activities*-- There will be an increase in international activities this year: a revitalization of the Mind Sports events and invitations from China, Japan, and Korea. We may also need more rules to account for potential cheating associated with Go AIs, particularly online. We haven't had any issues, but we need to get ahead of it.

Landham: There are some tournaments that ban cell phones

Okun: At the U.S. Go Congress, players in the Masters/Strong Players' room have to drop off their cell-phones.

Lebl: This isn't practical for the bigger tournaments

Scott: Plus, people may have needs that they can't give up their cellphones during tournaments

Kirschner: Is there a small group working on this so that we can give some guidance?
[Okun: Yes]

Hvlaka: But cellphones are going to be the least of our worries (eye glasses).

Lebl: Maybe we should do metal detectors.

Fede: I think that is impractical, because of medical devices, etc.

Hvlaka: It may just need to be an honor system. We need rules in place, but enforcement may be honor-system based. Violations would have severe consequences (bans).
[Cross-talk about various ways to cheat]

Okun: We're trying to stop the perception of cheating rather than actual cheating.

Kirschner moves that the committee should send any legislation on technology-related cheating to chapters prior to approving the final version. Haynes seconds. Okun abstained (given that it concerns instructions to him), otherwise unanimous. **Motion requiring AGA leadership to send legislation on technology-related cheating to chapters to review prior to final version approved.**

4. Update on Rank Certificate System

Les Lanphear [not chapter rep] joins.

Kirschner: The automatic calculations, based on the last 8 years of games for members, will be released soon.

Schumacher: Is this a change in rating mechanism?

Okun: No it's an honorary rank, like martial arts belts. You can also get these certificates by placing in the top 3 of your division in the US Go Congress. The other thing is that for high double digit kyu [up to 18kyu], pro teachers who run rating tournaments can grade these players [mostly kids] and can give them rank certificates. The certificate does have to be awarded after a tournament game.

Weimer: What about grandfathering older people into this rank system?

Kirschner: We chose 2010 as a start because the data prior to that wasn't clean enough to be used in this way.

Schumacher: Can we also talk about pro ranking? Is there a pro committee to talk about this?

Okun: It's an important issue, but not on the agenda. We need to figure more out so we can have a serious discussion about it.

Terpstra: Can these kids come and in and say, "this is my rank certificate, I want to play at x rank."

Okun: Yes, statements of pro teachers are already considered evidence enough.

Self-promotions are allowed, but not demotions.

Kirschner: These are rated games and AGA members, so the ranks shouldn't be ratings.

Terpstra: As a TD, do I have discretion to ignore rank certificates? [**Okun:** Yes]

Kirschner: Technically, no one self-promotes, all "self-promotions" are TD-promotions. So TDs have discretion

[cross-talk about self-promotion]

Schumacher: Should the US Open/Masters TD have the same discretion? I think we should discuss whether there should be more consistent policies across the years.

Okun: We will discuss that for next year's Congress.

Scott: Another concern raised about this year's Congress is that we're pairing European style, but doing prizes based on the AGA style. There's a mismatch and it's causing issues.

Gurujeet: It doesn't make sense to do it by bands [our current system].

Schumacher: Is this a problem with OpenGotha or how we use it? [How we use it]

Scott: In past years, TDs manually did some pairings to do tie-breaking.

Gundberg: I think mixing is okay, but tie-breakers should be done manually.

Kirschner: Banding is delicate because depending on the number of people per band, the bands should be defined in different ways. Doing it on autopilot doesn't work.

[cross-talk]

Weimer: There's an AGA rule that says that if there's a cash prize, prizes can't be split, they must be determined by tie-break.

Schumer: I think people should play within their ranks. Why do we have no handicaps when people play up? Ie 5k and 2k even. If we believe in our rating system, why aren't we handicapping appropriately?

Scott: The idea is partially that the US Open is supposed to be open.

Okun: But ratings aren't necessarily accurate due to improvements, different systems, etc. This process fixes these things. It's supposed to push people rapidly to a proper rating.

[cross-talk--- no consensus]

Okun: Maybe we need to have a special conversation about this at the next congress.

Schumacher moves to make a committee to investigate the US Open pairing policies,

Schumer seconds. **Okun** agrees to institute that.

5. Code of Conduct

Okun: Regarding Code of Conduct implementation: we've had several training sessions, and I believe that we are ready to move forward with it at a full scale.

Scott: After much feedback from the community, the version we've adopted is oriented around establishing the AGA as a welcoming community

Kirschner: Everyone has gotten the chance to review this, and the training sessions this week were good, but they were not well attended. This Code of Conduct is just the first step; we need to build the infrastructure. We'll have a lot of training information on the website, some of which applies to corporate things, but I'm also creating something that is very specific to our organization. There is a hotline for any issues.

Terpstra: I have a question. The Code of Conduct says that we will provide an escort if someone feels threatened – is this true?

Kirschner: In the extreme event where someone is threatened, we will facilitate individuals movement to safe locations, including bringing them to law enforcement. I understand that line is confusing and we may need to revise it, but a long standing policy is that if a TD can remove people who he/she feels may be threatening.

Fede: I imagine the language "for the remainder of the event" may be meant to indicate that the AGA cannot guarantee such things outside of the event.

Schumacher: I would like to express my appreciation for their work creating and implementing this.

Scott: Thank you, and I also want to emphasize that Karoline Li put a lot of work into this.

Kirschner: I just want to emphasize that you should prepare yourself to intervene if you observe poor behavior.

6. State Championships

Okun: Paul Ohmart is the lead guy on this. We encourage everyone to lead state championships.

Terpstra will be running the California tournament over thanksgiving, **Coplon** already led the one for Pennsylvania, **Rubenstein** plans to lead one for Illinois. Texas is working on one. Tennessee is working on one. Virginia has been distracted with running Go Congress.

[cross talk about CA state championship]

[cross talk about DC statehood with regards to State Championship]

Coplon: Is this moving towards a regional championship system? [**Okun:** No, but it could be.]

Schumer: Vermont was thinking about it, but it seemed too complicated, so people backed out.

Ohmart: Our goal is to make it as simple for you as possible. Regional tournaments are possible for smaller regions.

Rubenstein: I'm going to do two brackets at my next tournament: one for the State Championship, and one for the normal tournament.

Kirschner: The idea is that this is a developing process and it might change over time.

Khalsa: So, for the tristate DC-MD-VA area, can we do one tournament and have the 3 state champions? [Yes] What's the financial support for this?

Ohmart: Trophy money, moral support, some presidential points. There are handouts with information on the website.

Okun: If the money is an issue, perhaps it could be increased. We can discuss this.

Eagle: Would chapter points go to the chapter that hosted it or to all state chapters?

Kirschner: Chapters need to be in communication. That's the point.

7. New Business

Lanphier: There are no asian representatives here. Why not? We need to represent our community.

Rubenstein: Why? We're chapter representatives. We represent our chapters in their go playing, not our ethnic background.

Okun: This may be an issue of encouraging different groups of people to be involved in the organization.

Kirschner: This is a problem generally in this community's organization, and we need to work very hard to improve it.

Scott: I think this also applies to females in the go community not being welcomed enough.

Gunderson/Tuong: Our strong Asian AGA members aren't interested in paying money for AGA membership because there are strong enough players in their own communities.

Hvlaka: Maybe Asian people aren't interested in joining clubs.

Fede: This is a problem in all of our leadership and communities, and we should probably look to other NGOs and organizations for how to reach out to encourage more people to participate.

Lebl: Maybe we can work on making more incentives to join.

[cross-talk]

Rubenstein: I would like to see city, state as a thing to sort by "who's coming" on the congress list. [**Scott:** Okay].

Rubenstein: 1-day tournament AGA membership registrations cause issues because they appear as "expired". We need to do something about that.

Okun: Yes, this is a problem.

Rubenstein: I'd like to volunteer to help you solve it if there are issues. [Andy accepted]

Wilmes: On our website, a lot of our information on how to play go and run tournaments is outdated, and I think we should update it. [General agreement].

8. Future Congresses

Trying to move to organizing congresses to 2 years out.

Dave Weimer gives a presentation on 2019 Go Congress, which he is directing:

- Madison, Wisconsin-- on the lake boardwalk, adult refreshments on site. Next to State Street, which has a lot of restaurants and bars. Can fly into Madison airport, or you can fly to Chicago [O'hare] and take a bus (3 hrs – \$30) directly to campus. [Description of the building and rooms]. There are elevators. Main playing area is 5000 sqft. Catered lunch. Close to the state capitol. Madison has great paths for biking/walking/running. Swimming available
- Tentative pricing: \$450 adults, \$425 young adult, \$400 youth, \$250 child, \$100 non-player. Break even point is 319 attendees. Estimated total costs for standard adult player: \$1185.
- Standard dorm single-\$60 or \$38 double/night, including breakfast. Rooms have ac, small fridge. 3 blocks from the main playing area. Hotel style- \$124/night single or \$60/night double, two blocks from playing area. Limited supply (probably at least 60 rooms). No minimums; you don't hurt us by staying off site. We aren't making a profit on the rooms.
- Lunch is the buffett (\$18/meal), breakfast in the dorm, dining hall next to dorms (\$13/meal), cafeteria options.
- Parking isn't free: \$72/wk.

Rubenstein moves to approve Madison, WI as the location for next year's congress, **Hvlaka** seconds, **Madison approved as the 2019 Go Congress location.**

In development website at gocongress-dev.herokuapp.com/2019

2020 congress

Colorado hosts the Go Congress every 10 years. Scouting locations in Ft. Collins. The club there will host, but other cities have clubs that have agreed to help. Lots of local breweries. Closest airport is Denver.

Meeting Adjourned.

Draft Minutes of 2019 General Assembly

This draft will be updated to the final version upon approval by the General Assembly

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Motions Passed

1. Estes Park, CO approved as the 2020 US Go Congress location.

Call to Order and Quorum

Andy Okun calls to order at 2:23pm

80 votes of chapters represented. Quorum is present so the meeting can continue.

- Central: 22 votes from 7 chapters
- Eastern: 28 votes from 8 chapters
- Western: 30 votes from 6 chapters

Roll Call:

Chapter Representatives

Bob Bacon – Triangle Go Club (5)
Paul Barchilon – Boulder Kids and Teens Club (3)
Terry Benson – Brooklyn Go Club (3)
Steve Colburn – Empty Sky Go Club (4)
Arnold Eudell – proxy for Baltimore Go Club (3)
Devin Frazee – Columbus OH Go Club (4)
Jeff Horn – Davis-Sacramento Go Club (3)
Bart Jacobs – Austin Go Club (5)
Gurujeet Khalsa – National Go Center (4), proxy for XYZ Private Go Club (3), and Greater Washington Go Club (2)
Andy Okun – Santa Monica Go Club (4)
Brad Rose – Peoria and Normal Go Club (1)
Mark Rubenstein – Evanston Go Club (4)
Lee Schumacher – GoClub@Google (2)
Garrett Smith – NOVA Go Club (4)
Ted Terpstra – San Diego Go Club (9)
Wric Wainwright – Boulder Go Club (2)
Nick Wilmes – representative for Seattle AGA Chapter (11) and Ghosts of Seattle (1)
Steve Zilber – Cleveland Go Club (3)

AGA/AGF Officers

Paul Barchilon – AGF Vice President, chapter rep
Terry Benson – AGF President, chapter rep
Steve Colburn – Eastern Region Board Representative, chapter rep
Arnold Eudell – Elections officer, chapter proxy
Devin Frazee – Central Region Board Representative-elect, chapter rep
Gurujeet Khalsa – Eastern Region Board Representative, chapter rep
Chris Kirschner – Western Region Board Representative, VP of Planning
Andy Okun – AGA President
Lisa Scott – Central Region Board Representative, Chair-elect of the Board, Congress Coordinator, Coordinator for Diversity and Inclusion
Samantha Fede – AGA Secretary

Attendees who are not Representatives or Officers

Joseph Cua
Todd Heidenreich

Stephen (Xiaochen) Hu
 Terri Schurter
 Dennis Wheeler

1. Future Congresses

The 2020 Go Congress is planned for Estes Park, Colorado. Paul Barchilon [co-director] gives a presentation about the site, including showing pictures of the site and nearby locations.

Highlights include:

- Cooler (at altitude). Stanley hotel (from the Shining) is a major historic place. Beautiful Rocky Mountain town, beautiful outdoor activities. Hotel style rooms and “camp” rooms that sleep up to 6 and have a private bath.

Terpstra: How far away are the dorms from eating? [50 yards - 5 min walk]

Schurter: Are there single rooms? [Yes, either book a whole bunk room or a hotel-style room]

Okun: How many people can we fit? [180 rooms blocked off]

Scott: We might need more rooms, and we can ask, but we will be on the hook for them.

Fraze: Is there camping? [Hasn't been looked into yet]

Kirschner: Will there be a cap on the number of single rooms? Good to keep in mind in case these get filled quickly.

Scott: Looking at the contract, we can go over that number. Assuming there's availability.

Benson: When do they tend to sell out? [**Scott:** Book early.]

Khalsa: I've looked into cabins; basically you aren't going to be able to get a cabin unless you're a YMCA member, because they are very full.

- Player attendance costs run \$1025 (shared room w/ 6 people) to \$2365 (single hotel style). This includes food, registration etc., except dinner.
- Lodging + meals is one package. You can pay out of pocket if you're off site. There's a cafeteria, deli and private restaurant. There are shuttles that run to town. We're planning to have a few special dinners. Lectures are in the lodge areas. There is parking. The venue is at 8000 feet.
- The campus is dry, but they've said the policy is “don't ask don't tell,” so you can buy alcohol off-site and keep it in rooms. There is wifi, but the cell service is iffy. There are shuttles from the Denver airport (1.5 - 1.75 hrs). We know transportation is an issue for people, so that's a priority for us. We may charter buses or look at coordinating rides. We're going back to our usual website.

Rubenstein: Can we add sort by city/state to the “Who's Coming” list?

Scott: There's a privacy issue with publishing exact city.

Rubenstein: Can't people opt in/out?

Scott: We'll consider it.

Schurter: When will housing/registration open?

Scott: It's basically ready now, but we may be able to open housing earlier than general registration. We'll send info via the AGA listserv.

Smith: Why aren't we using the congress listserv to contact people?

Scott: It doesn't carry over year to year. Only on a per year basis.

Terpstra: Do you have to pay for the room in full? [There's a 35% deposit, refundable by around June 1st].

Benson: I move that we have the US Congress in Estes Park, CO next year; Devin

Fraze seconds. Jeff **Horn** abstains, otherwise unanimous approval, except Eric

Wainwright, Co-Director, who votes no according to tradition.

Estes Park, CO approved as the 2020 Go Congress location

2. President's Report

Given by AGA President, **Andy Okun**

- Membership is pretty stable, but there has been an increase in youth members. Up to 200,000 people were watching the Twitch broadcast at some point.
- Overview of budget [also discussed during Board Meeting, see [7/19/2019 AGA Board Meeting minutes](#) for details].

Rubenstein: We have a lot of video of past Teachers Workshops, but the video is not of good quality. Can we buy cameras for AGA stuff to start a repository?

Kirschner: People who use these cameras (recording and presenting) are not trained properly so the quality of our videos has room for improvement. Perhaps we can also spend money to train people.

Benson: We need better microphones, for better audio, rather than thinking about cameras.

[cross-talk]

Okun: We have people in the organization willing to help.

Kirschner: We should pay someone.

Benson: Perhaps providing comps at congress.

3. New Business

Rubenstein: The communication between our membership manager and Paypal is a problem. Ratings for my tournaments have taken a very long time.

Colburn: We fixed it as of the beginning of May. There's a backlog, so please be patient with us. We also had a new person take over ratings just recently. We are monitoring this.

Zilber: What can we do to make the system more resilient?

Scott: Steve did a great job with the migration, we shouldn't have these issues any more.

Terpstra: I have a problem with the AGA: they don't confirm receipt of my emails.

Scott: Because it is a volunteer's email account, not something like an application or a payment that you are submitting for confirmation, so it is not appropriate to have a confirmation message; various people look at the emails when they can.

Okun: You can email again if you haven't heard.

Smith: How are day passes supposed to work, because they get 24 hours only. [This is an automation issue]

Kirschner: Can't we make 3-day passes?

Colburn: Theoretically, but categories of membership needs to be voted on by the assembly next year.

Okun: We will **add discussion of restructuring of our membership to next year's Assembly Meeting Agenda.**

Smith: What about the name of an event in a new field, to solve this problem?

Colburn: there's nothing like that now, but that's something to think about.

Benson summarized teacher compensation plans [also discussed at Board Meeting, see [7/19/2019 AGA Board Meeting minutes](#) for details]

Rubenstein: Why didn't we have an app this year?

Gurujeet: I don't know. I wasn't consulted about why we decided not to use it this year.

Scott: The app was broken, and not at the level of professionalism we would like. We're looking into it.

Schumacher: I think the problem was that there wasn't any correspondence between the AGA infrastructure and the congress infrastructure. I emailed the tech person, and never heard back.

Okun: What do people think about having an app?

[Everyone is in favor of the app, but expressed a desire to have physical options, more options, better social media integration.]

Terpstra: Can I ask attendees to self-report gender on the TD lists so that I can better TD these pair go tournaments?

[?]: Does indicating "other" disqualify someone from playing pair go?

Okun: Technically, but...

Heindrich: I run pair go at Go Congress, and if it's not a qualifier for the Japan trip [where there are strict qualifier rules over which we have no control], I don't enforce the male-female gender pair rules for pair go.

Okun: I'd like to increase 2-day marquee tournaments (i.e., MD open, NJ open [which is no longer run], Cotsen).

Smith: How about expanding chapter rewards for hosting tournaments (and other organizational activities)? [**Okun:** in favor]

Terpstra: Can we have "last updated" added to the website?

Colburn: No, because there are some issues. The date of terms could be posted.

Hu: Players seemed to prefer 7 rounds of the masters instead of 9 rounds. Workload also seemed better for game recorders and TDs, so I would encourage that to happen in the future.

Fraze: I'm devoting time right now to work on a project to provide a reference for in-person go play.

Colburn moves to approve last year's assembly minutes. They were not sent out to the majority of the membership, so this motion was not seconded, and it was tabled.

Scott: We need to have a discussion again about pictures of children posted in the context of AGA tournaments including the US Go Congress. We've discussed this before, but we need to revisit the discussion.

Benson: It's unrealistic to check if kids have given consent.

Okun: I will handle this administratively.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25CDT.

Statement on Injustice (6/17/2020)

The American Go Association shares the communal outrage at the inequality and injustice suffered by so many minority groups, and particularly by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Racism and racial inequality are anathema to the inclusive mission of our organization. The American Go Association stands behind its mission to foster inter-cultural and international goodwill through Go-related activities. Current events have prompted us to consider how we can be more conscious of the different experiences that shape our members' lives, and reminded us of our priority to listen and learn from each other, and to welcome all into our community.

While we are a diverse community in many ways, we recognize that we have far more work to do to make our community equally welcoming to everyone. The experiences of people of color matter deeply to us, and we welcome any feedback so that we can learn how we can do better. The creation of the [AGA Code of Conduct](#) between 2015 and 2018 was catalyzed by the experiences that members shared with us, and we want the structure that it created to be a forum where experiences can continue to be shared in a way that helps us grow and become better as an organization. However, we realize we cannot place this burden on people of color alone. We ask every member of our community for help in becoming more aware of and addressing inequalities and injustices that exist in our community. You can contact the Code of Conduct Committee at any time at CodeofConduct@usgo.org or 240-513-7825.

We understand that words are not enough. The AGA board will take up issues of diversity and inclusion at its upcoming June 28 meeting, where concrete actions can be initiated to improve our organization in this regard. I am happy to present your ideas to the board as Coordinator for Diversity and Inclusion (email lisa.scott@usgo.org), or you can submit suggestions through the Code of Conduct Committee as described above. As a member you can listen into the meeting and observe the development of these initiatives in real time. You can also see a summary of the meeting in the posted minutes, available at <https://www.usgo.org/board-minutes>, and in the EJournal. To join the June 28 board meeting, please email lisa.scott@usgo.org for call-in information.

-AGA Code of Conduct Committee

AGA Board Approved Policy Documents

Congress Scholarship Fund (11/17/2019)

Proposal Narrative

The US Go Congress has a complicated and variable financial structure, which has changed substantially since 2007. Since the introduction of clearly articulated stipends for professionals at the Lancaster congress in 2007, supporting our professionals has become a larger and larger portion of our congress costs, while simultaneously most other expenses have also become fixed. **In essence, this means that once the Congress's break-even point is met, the overwhelming percentage of additional revenue is surplus.** *For more information about the Financials of the US Go Congress, please see the appendix below.*

This has led to consistently large surpluses from Congresses, which are out of line with the membership's general feeling that the congress is too expensive. (For some examples of public discussion of the expense of the US Go Congress, see [USGO Congress Costs in 2020 on Life in 19x19](#), [First Time Going to US Go Congress on Reddit](#), and the [comments following David Bogie's August 7 post to Go \(Baduk, Weiqi\) Players on Facebook](#), responding to the referenced L19 discussion.) One way to address this issue is to put more of the funds contributed by those who can pay into subsidies for those who cannot.

This proposal argues for the creation of a Congress Scholarship fund, which would be maintained from the proceeds of the US Go Congress, with or without seed money from the AGA's coffers, or a portion of the Congress surplus that is allocated to the AGA each year. This fund may also be augmented by donations from the membership, as was discussed during the Future Congresses meeting at the 2019 US Go Congress. *For more information about Ideas to Facilitate US Go Congress Attendance by the Average Go Player, for whom price may be an overwhelming concern, see the appendix below.*

The goal would be to create categories of attendee – without recourse to means testing – who would qualify for a congress scholarship due to demographic circumstances such as age and student status. We should also consider (if and only if appropriate staffing can be secured to manage the fund) scholarships for those who have made significant contributions to the go community in the recent past (for example, the calendar year preceding the congress), through activities such as teaching, mentoring, tournament coordination, etc.

The AGF provides substantial support for youth, particularly strong youth, but also youth who have participated in specific tournaments and scholarship competitions. For this reason, the current iteration of this proposal is oriented towards helping adults for whom attendance at the US Go Congress would require a substantial portion of their income. This fund is intended to be

a living thing, however, so its focus could and should change over time, as the needs of the membership change.

Below, I have compiled some of the potential ways that the Scholarship Fund could be funded:

- 50% of the Congress surplus over \$10,000 (if agreed to by the Congress Directors for a given year). *For the specific proposal with regards to funding from the Congress surplus, please see the optional Addendum to the Memorandum of Agreement in the appendix below.* The 2020 USGC Directors have expressed their approval of the proposal.
- Funds donated for the purpose by Congress attendees when they register for the US Go Congress. *For the origin of this proposal, see Ideas to Facilitate US Go Congress Attendance by the Average Go Player in the appendix below.*
- Additional funds from the AGA portion of the Congress surplus.
- Additional funds from the AGA reserves.

Below, I have suggested some potential uses to which these funds can be put, although I think that some of funds should be reserved for new proposals that may appear each year.

- Supporting US Go Congress attendance by young adults age 18-26.
 - This age group is often considered as separate from older adults in Europe, and there is substantial support for considering the specific financial needs of this population, who have all come of age since the Great Recession (and whose lifetime earning potential is therefore greatly hindered – for more on this, see for example this [article from Bankrate](#) – look at the data, not the conclusion that you should use financial products – and [this one from CNBC](#)).
- Supporting US Go Congress attendance by students of all ages (with documentation of current enrollment, current idea card, etc.).
- Supporting teachers (K-12 and Go teachers), particularly if they bring student groups. This may coincide with the soon-to-be-implemented Congress Tour Group Policy that was composed by Chris Kirschner, Andy Okun, and Lisa Scott in 2016, with revisions in 2019. *For the Congress Tour Group Policy, presently still a draft, see the appendix below.*
- Supporting US Go Congress attendance by retired folks, or folks over a certain age (perhaps 70).
- Subsidizing housing costs at expensive venues.
- Subsidizing group ground transportation from designated locations.

Formal Proposal

Proposal

The AGA should create a Scholarship Fund for the US Go Congress, which would allow the AGA to make the event more appealing to folks in certain groups for whom price may be a limiting factor on their attending the US Go Congress.

Funding of Scholarship

The Scholarship Fund should be primarily funded by allocating a portion of the Congress surplus each year. Additional funds can be solicited from AGA members and Congress attendees, who may make a donation under specified conditions and with specified recognition, which may change from time to time.

The AGA may seed the fund with a specified amount of money, most productively a sum in the range of \$10,000 to \$20,000.

Distribution of Scholarship Funds

The Scholarship Funds should be distributed through a public process that primarily designates specific groups as foci for the distributions of funds in a given year. The Scholarship Funds may also be used to recognize the contributions of individual organizers, who may as a result receive public approbation and recognition for their service to go in North America.

Management of Scholarship Distribution

A committee originally comprised of folks holding positions *ex officio* should be created to manage the distribution of the funds in the first two years. This committee should consist of the AGA President, the Congress Coordinator, the Chairperson of the Board, and the Congress Director(s). Following this initial phase, and particularly if the AGA desires to recognize specific individuals, a permanent committee should be set up.

North American Go Federation

North American Go Federation

Constitution of By-Laws

ARTICLE I: Name

1. The Association shall be called “The North American Go Federation” (NAGF).

ARTICLE II: Purpose

1. The mandates of the NAGF are as follows:
 - i. To represent the Go community of North America in international contexts.
However, this does not limit General Members’ ability to interact with international organizations or to represent themselves.
 - ii. To establish and maintain professional promotion and ranking systems.
 - iii. To organize pro qualification events.
 - iv. To organize North American Championships.
 - v. To support Go promotional activities in North America.

ARTICLE III: Official Headquarters and Language

1. The official headquarters of the NAGF are located in The National Go Center: 4652 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington DC, USA.
2. The official language of the NAGF is English.

ARTICLE IV: Members

1. Types of Membership. There shall be one primary class of membership:
 - i. General Member: A body that represents Go in a country or territory located in North America. There is only one General Member per country.
2. Members' Rights and Responsibilities.
 - i. At an Annual Assembly of the General Members, known as the General Assembly, the General Members may establish such other criteria for membership or categories of membership, including a schedule or an amount of

membership dues, as they deem appropriate, including the rights of the Members in general.

3. New Members.

- i. The initial members of the NAGF are the American Go Association and the Canadian Go Association.
- ii. When the NAGF receives a new membership application, the Board makes a recommendation, and the General Assembly decides with a simple majority vote.

4. Meetings.

- i. The General Assembly shall be held yearly. The General Assembly shall meet at the place, time, and date fixed by the Board.
- ii. The General Assembly may be convened outside the yearly schedule when needed.
- iii. The General Assembly may be held by audio or video conference call or any other agreed upon electronic means.

ARTICLE V: Board

1. Powers and Number.

- i. The number of Board of Directors (Directors) constituting the entire Board shall be not more than nine.
- ii. Designation of term of office
 1. Each Director shall be 21 years of age or older.
 2. Directors shall be elected individually for a term of two years. Re-election is permitted.
 3. Should a Director resign, the position will be filled through the next scheduled election.
 4. Each General Member has one Director on the Board.
 5. A body representing all NAGF professional players has one Director on the Board.
 6. Up to six Directors are sought by the existing Board of Directors for the benefit of the NAGF from the North American Go community
 7. The Directors elect one of their number as Chairperson of the Board
 8. The Directors elect one of their number as Executive Director

2. Meetings.

- i. The Board of Directors shall meet on at least one occasion each calendar year, at times and places fixed by the Board (online meetings may count for this purpose).
 - ii. Special meetings. At any time, unscheduled directors meetings may be convened by the Chairperson of the Board, or upon the written request of not less than two other sitting Directors, or as may otherwise be permitted by law, and notification of such meetings will be sent by the General Secretary to the remaining Directors. Meetings may be held by audio or video conference call or any other agreed upon electronic means, as directed by the Board and stated in the notice of meeting.
 - iii. At the General Assembly, the Executive Director, and the Chairperson of the Board, jointly or individually, shall report to the General Assembly the state of affairs of the NAGF.
 - iv. The Chairperson of the Board shall lead and set agendas for all business meetings, as well as be responsible for the overall operations of the Board. A Chairperson of the Board may be reelected without limit so long as he/she continues to be reelected as a Director.
3. Notice of Meetings.
 - i. Notice of the place, date, and hour of the annual meeting shall be given by the General Secretary to each Director and Officer by email, mail, or by personal delivery, not less than sixty days before the date of the meeting.
 - ii. Notice of the place, date, and hour of other meetings shall be given by the General Secretary to each Director and Officer by email, mail, or by personal delivery, not less than fourteen days before the date of the meeting. Notice of special meetings shall indicate the purpose for which they are called and the person or persons calling the meeting.
4. Quorum.
 - i. At all meetings of the Board where official decisions are made, a simple majority of the Directors then in office shall be the minimum number required to make official decisions.
 - ii. The Directors may be present in person, by letter, or by proxy.
 - iii. Voting by proxy shall be permitted.

5. Action by the Board.
 - i. If and when the Directors shall collectively consent in writing, through any medium, to any action taken by the NAGF either before or after the action is taken, such action shall be a valid action as if it had been taken at a meeting of the Directors. Written consent shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors.
 - ii. A Director may participate in a meeting of Directors by a video conference or telephone call or similar communication by which all persons participating in the meeting may hear and/or see each other. All participants must be advised of the communications options in advance of the meeting and the names of the participants in the conference must be divulged to all participants.
6. Compensation.
 - i. Directors shall not receive any wage, commission, or salary, except that the Directors may receive reimbursement of expenditures reasonably incurred on behalf of activities for the benefit of the NAGF.
7. Removal of Directors.
 - i. Any Director may be removed for malfeasance, dereliction of duty, or irreconcilable conflict of interest only by a vote of the electing constituency, which must be 67% of those voting. Such recall may be initiated by: a) The petition of at least 2 General Member, b) An affirmative vote of two thirds of the Directors at the Board meeting in which the matter was included as an agenda item in the announcement of the meeting at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE VI: Officers

1. Definitions For the purpose of this section:
 - i. The term 'appointing authority' means the Board or the Executive Director as appropriate.
 - ii. The term 'Officers' is defined as the Executive Director, General Secretary, Treasurer.
 - iii. The term 'staff' includes all other appointees.
2. Appointments and duties:

- i. The Board shall have the sole authority to appoint the following Officers: Executive Director, General Secretary, and Treasurer. No person may hold more than one of these positions at the same time.
 - ii. The Board shall determine the qualifications for each office.
 - iii. Appointments for these offices shall be approved by a simple majority vote and Acting Secretary or Acting Treasurer until the required vote is achieved.
 - iv. The Board may appoint non-Officer staff as appropriate, with or without compensation, to perform certain duties for the NAGF.
 - v. The Executive Director may appoint subordinate, Coordinators, Committee Chairs, Liaisons, Project Managers or other staff, with or without compensation, to provide operational support to the Executive Director and shall so inform the Board. All such appointees report to the Executive Director.
 - vi. Appointees have only the authority, and may perform only the duties, assigned to them from time to time by the Board or the Executive Director. Duties may be added after the original appointment.
3. Suspension, Removal or Resignation of Appointments.
- i. The Board has the sole authority to suspend or remove from office any person appointed by the Board. Suspension or removal shall be for good cause and the vote must be a simple majority of the Board in favor of such action.
 - ii. In the event the Board wishes to suspend or remove an officer, it shall follow these procedures:
 1. At a properly called Board meeting, the Board may decide to place on the agenda of a subsequent Board meeting a vote on the suspension or removal of an Officer.
 2. As soon as possible after such decision, the Board shall give the Officer written notice of the Board's intention to hold such a vote. The notice to the Officer shall explain clearly why it intends to hold such a vote and provide at least fourteen calendar days' notice before the meeting agenda is published.
 3. After the fourteen days have expired, the Board may publish the agenda for the Board meeting at which the vote will take place, and if it does, the

Board must send the notice to all Board of Directors, General Members, and Corporate Officers. The Board shall provide at least thirty days between the publication of the meeting agenda and the meeting at which the vote is scheduled.

4. In exceptional and urgent circumstances, the Board may act to suspend any officer instantly for up to sixty (60) days for good cause without prior notice or publication. The Board shall advise the officer immediately to cease all corporate activity, provide reasons to the officer and shall investigate all appropriate matters.
 5. Any officer or appointee may resign on his or her own initiative at any time by written notice to the appropriate appointing authority. A resignation notice containing any language indicating an intention of instant effect shall be effective upon its receipt by the appointing authority, General Secretary or the Chairman of the Board either electronically or physically.
 6. Unless instructed otherwise by the Board, the Executive Director may remove from duty any of the Executive Director's appointees with or without cause upon written notice to the Board and the appointee.
4. Compensation:
- i. With the express prior written consent of the Board, Officers or other staff and appointees may receive wages, commissions, or salaries for their services.
 - ii. All Officers, staff and appointees may be reimbursed for actual expenditures reasonably incurred on behalf of activities for the benefit of the NAGF.
5. Executive Director.
- i. The Board shall appoint an Executive Director every two years. The Board may reappoint a current Executive Director.
 - ii. The Executive Director shall exercise full operational control and management over the business affairs and property of the NAGF. The Executive Director also shall have all powers expressly delegated by the Board and the By-laws.
 - iii. The Executive Director shall see that the resolutions and directives received from the Board are implemented to the best of his/her abilities.

- iv. When instructed or authorized by the Board, the Executive Director shall execute for the NAGF any contracts, deeds, or other instruments in accordance with the delegation or instructions.
 - v. Where such authority has not been clearly delegated by the Board, the Executive Director must seek prior approval before taking actions that:
 - 1. establish formal internal or external policies, except for operational and administrative policies;
 - 2. establish new formal relations between the NAGF and any other organization or entity;
 - 3. legally obligate the NAGF to take or refrain from taking any action that it might otherwise wish to take.
6. General Secretary.
- i. The Board shall appoint a General Secretary every two years. The Board may reappoint a current General Secretary.
 - ii. The General Secretary shall have the powers and duties delegated by the Board and these By-laws. The General Secretary shall see that the resolutions and directives of the Board are properly recorded and delivered except where responsibility is assigned to some other person by the Board.
 - iii. The General Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board and the General Assembly and record all votes and the minutes of all proceedings. The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Directors and the General Assembly for which notice may be required.
 - iv. The General Secretary shall execute with the Executive Director all conveyances, contracts, or other obligations as authorized by the Board in the name of the NAGF.
 - v. The General Secretary shall maintain the NAGF records in a safe and secure place at all times. The records shall be kept in an organized manner such that research may be conducted efficiently by topic, Board meetings, or fiscal year. Non-sensitive records may be inspected upon written request of any Board of Director, Officer, or General Member.
7. The Treasurer.
- i. The Board shall appoint a Treasurer every two years. The Board may reappoint a current Treasurer.

- ii. The Treasurer shall have the powers and duties delegated by the Board, and these By-laws. The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds and securities of the NAGF and shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in records which shall belong to the NAGF.
- iii. The Treasurer shall deliver to the Board annual account of all financial transactions and bank accounts. The Treasurer shall at all reasonable times make available for inspection the books and accounts to the Executive Director or the Board.
- iv. The Treasurer shall maintain records in a safe and secure place at all times. The records shall be kept in an organized manner such that research may be conducted efficiently by account, project, or fiscal year. The records may be inspected upon written request of any Board of Director, Officer, or General Member.

ARTICLE VII: Books and Records

1. The NAGF shall keep complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its Board of Directors, General Assembly, and committees.

ARTICLE VIII: Fiscal Year

1. The fiscal year of the NAGF shall end on the last day of the month of December unless changed by the Board.

ARTICLE IX: Amendments

1. These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the General Members. Voting may be carried at the General Assembly or electronically.

MOU Establishing the North American Go Federation (NAGF)

Introduction

The North American Go Federation (NAGF) will be a joint venture between the American Go Association (AGA) and Canadian Go Association (CGA). CGA and AGA therefore define and control the scope of NAGF operations.

There are two key motivations for establishing the NAGF. First, many of our international partners expect to cooperate with a regional organization. The NAGF will serve as the North American face of our shared Go community. Second, our professional activities are fully North American, it is more natural to have them managed by body whose scope explicitly matches that.

Funding

The NAGF organization is responsible for determining its own funding needs. It may then apply to the AGA & CGA for support, or apply for external funding. The AGA & CGA can consider NAGF applications for funding as per any other spending on their budget. As NAGF develops, it may become convenient for CGA and AGA to approve standard contributions to simplify NAGF planning.

Additional North American Partners

On establishment the CGA and AGA will be the only North American national Go organizations participating in the NAGF. But we don't exclude the possibility of other North American countries participating in the future; in fact we would welcome it. When/if that possibility becomes a reality the NAGF bylaws will be updated to reflect their participation, and the CGA & AGA would be asked to approve shared control of the NAGF.

Overlap between CGA and AGA Activities and the NAGF

The CGA and AGA retain their international functions where tradition and host-country's wishes dictate or when the activities are not continent-specific. Reference how the European Go Federation and the Ibero-American Go Federation separate their international operation with the member Associations and National Federations. Existing examples include:

1. Events that are focused on "per country" representation, like the World Amateur, or the Prime Ministers cup. In that case the NAGF won't perform any useful function, and it

makes more sense for the CGA and AGA to retain their own direct connections with the events. 2. Pair Go, which has long standing arrangements with the CGA & AGA. 3. Applications for funding from international sponsors (for example KBA offers equipment grants to Go promoting organizations abroad)

In general the AGA & CGA can use their judgement which international activities naturally belong to the NAGF. And of course they can reach out to the NAGF and their sister CGA/AGA partner to discuss what makes sense in a particular new case.

Administrative Management

We want to keep administrative overhead for this organization to a minimum. So we are not planning a separate corporation for the NAGF. The head office of the NAGF will be the National Go Center in Washington D.C, and NAGF officials will communicate using a National Go Center email account. Funds will be managed through the AGA accounts.

Overseas Tour Operator Policy

Adopted by the AGA Board

1. This policy adopted by the AGA Board of Directors governs the relationship between the AGA and any person or entity that seeks to register or represent Congress attendees from outside the United States, whether for profit or not.
2. Any person who plans to lead a group including three or more non-relatives is subject to this policy. Individuals booking for themselves or small groups of family or friends, and not as a public event or for monetary gain, are not governed by this policy.
3. The AGA expects anyone who seeks to act as a tour operator to inform the AGA in advance, by January 1 of the year of the Congress, and to abide by this policy. To that end, before the AGA will accept third party group registrations, it will ask anyone seeming to act as a tour operator to agree to this policy and to provide the AGA with the necessary information to enforce this policy. Should the third party and the AGA both agree, the third party will be approved as a tour operator for the Congress in question.
4. No unregistered tours will be permitted to operate with the U.S. Go Congress.
5. The AGA understands that a tour operator may seek to make a profit on the venture of organizing a group to attend the Congress. In doing so, the tour group operator must not misrepresent information about the Congress or its prices, as discussed in detail below.
6. For an agreed tour operator, the AGA will
 - a. Assist to the degree it can with local information about the Congress and the Congress site, and will help the tour operator make arrangements, as it would for any other attendee.
 - b. Assist with registration and housing questions.
 - c. Help with visa letters, in the event some of the attendees require visas to enter the US. The AGA can only help with visas if timely and complete information is provided. The AGA will only provide visa letters for attendees who have already paid, unless visas are required before registration has been opened. In the absence of special circumstances, the AGA will only provide visa letters for tour group leaders, go players, and their immediate families. Any abuse of the visa letters may end the AGA's working relationship with the tour operator, and may be reported to authorities.
 - d. Provide information, graphics, and other materials about the Congress beforehand to help the tour operator with marketing. The tour operator does not have the right to use any other AGA materials without the permission of the AGA.
 - e. Provide operator with a blocking schedule for all accommodations based on the host facility's policy on group blocking.
7. An agreed tour operator must

- a. Not use the AGA's name, logo, or other intellectual property, including pictures from prior Congresses, in any marketing materials without clearing each item with the AGA first.
 - b. Not misrepresent its relationship with the AGA.
 - c. Not misrepresent the Congress, including but not limited to what is included with registration, the experience the players are likely to have, or the prize pool.
 - d. Not negotiate separately with the host facility.
 - e. Faithfully represent the elements of Congress registration in accordance with its representation on the AGA and Congress websites. This includes only requiring extra fees for those events for which the Congress requires extra fees.
 - f. Include in its marketing materials and website a link to the Go Congress website so that players can learn more about the Congress on their own.
 - g. Comply with and ensure that all members of their group comply with all safety and information requirements of the Congress, in particular any requirements regarding minors in attendance. This includes all forms required of Congress attendees and tour groups, including but not limited to minor agreement forms, attendee registration forms, and tour group registration forms.
 - h. Must completely convey the Congress's safety and information requirements to group members and ensure their compliance, including bearing the burden of accurate and complete translation of legal materials. Any failure to properly provide information or safe guardianship for minors may result in attendees being denied participation in the Congress.
8. In order to ensure compliance with this policy, the AGA will require a \$5,000 deposit to be wired to the AGA before a person or entity can become a tour operator. The deposit may be credited against the registration fees, room and board, and other expenses of Congress, but if additional expenses are borne by AGA due to acts of the tour operator, the tour operator agrees to make all additional payments during the registration process. Any unused balance will be returned to the tour operator.
 9. New operators, or those whose relationship has been informal prior to January 1, 2020, must immediately comply with this policy in full. Operators with a prior relationship in good standing with the AGA will be permitted to transition to adopting this policy between the period January 1, 2020, and September 1, 2023, according to individually agreed upon schedules

AGA Financial Support for Tournaments System

Summary

The purpose of this system is to promote and support major regionally oriented tournaments that will attract greater numbers of players. We expect these events to be annual, and the premier event within the region during that year. For this purpose, we have designed an algorithm that allocates financial support appropriately for regions, which we are calling catchment areas, of different size both geographically and in terms of Go playing population.

The system for organizing and applying for these funds is similar to what we use for supporting State Championships [{link to State Championship webpage}](#). Chapters within the region must come together to select a primary organizer, who will work with the AGA to ensure that established standards are met. We hope that such selections will be unanimously approved; but there are voting rules for cases in which the selection is contested. (see State Championship election standards)

Our way of providing funds to all areas of the county is to specify catchment areas. Each catchment area will be eligible to obtain financial support for one event each year. Where States are large and population sparse, the State and catchment area will be the same. i.e. Ohio, Florida, Oregon. California and Texas may choose to be divided into two catchment areas, due to their size and population. If deemed appropriate by all concerned, adjoining States may join to have a single event. In some cases where States are small and closely grouped, this is mandated.

The multi-state catchment areas are:

Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont
Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island
New York, New Jersey, Delaware
Maryland, West Virginia, Washington DC

All other catchment areas are States

Note: the catchment area definition is used only to determine who the organizers will be, and the location of the event. It places no restriction on who may compete.

States running Championships may use that tournament as its annual catchment area event.

Qualification Requirements

Tournament must be organized by current Chapter(s) of the AGA.

Chapter(s) must be chosen by agreement with all chapters in the catchment area.

An application [[link to application](#)] for recognition must be received a minimum of 45 days prior to play.

An approved budget will be required a minimum of 30 days prior to play.

AGA reimbursement will be provided only after receiving an accounting which shall permit a maximum of the lesser of \$200 or 25% of the AGA financial support to be retained by the host Chapter(S). (Large upfront expenses such as venue deposits may be provided ahead as needed.)

Tournament must be ratable under AGA requirements for rating tournaments.

We prefer a minimum of 4 rounds and 2 days of play; but the AGA coordinator will work with organizers to create a premier event in the time available in the local area.

AGA code of conduct will be in force during the tournament.

Tournament must be announced in the AGA E-Journal a minimum of 22 days prior to play.

A minimum entry fee of \$5.00 is required.

The event should be geographically distant (~ 75 miles or more) from any other supported event within six months.

Tournament entry must be available to amateur players at all levels. (But multiple sections restricting by strength, or by other qualifications, such as those required for State Championship competition is permitted.)

Statement on In-Person Play (3/14/2020)

Generally, the AGA considers promoting face-to-face go to be one of its biggest priorities. As COVID-19 has progressed, however, it has become clear that practicing social distancing is something that everyone needs to do for their health and the health of those around them.

With that in mind, the AGA is encouraging folks to cancel or postpone all planned club and tournament events in March and April. This is a developing situation that is changing weekly (and lately daily), and we hope that we will be able to resume in-person play soon – once the pandemic has subsided.

The Seattle Go Center in Seattle and the National Go Center in Washington, DC have both suspended tournaments and face-to-face play and are closely monitoring the situation. Updates are at seattlego.org and nationalgocenter.org.

At this time, the AGA is making no recommendations about events in May or any time after that. Preparations for the US Go Congress in Estes Park at the beginning of August are continuing, even as we develop contingency plans in case the effects of the pandemic continue into the summer. Congress staff are working closely with the YMCA and monitoring recommendations from public officials. Colorado has declared a state of emergency and recommended postponing gatherings of 250 or more for the time being.

Stay safe – and maybe take this opportunity to rediscover online go playing, read some go books, and watch some of the many videos available on Twitch and YouTube!

Statement Cancelling the 2020 US Go Congress (4/17/2020)

At a Special Board Meeting held on April 15th, the AGA board, with the agreement of the Go Congress organizers in Colorado, voted to postpone the 2020 US Go Congress in Estes Park to a future year, meaning that there will be no US Go Congress in 2020.

Over the next few weeks, the AGA and the US Go Congress will continue with the cancellation process, including refunding registration fees that were already paid. We expect these refunds to happen over the next month or so; you do not need to reach out to the Congress team to get your refund.

Given the seriousness of the Coronavirus epidemic, the AGA cannot in good conscience bring together our customary crowd from around the country and the world. The AGA does not take this decision lightly, and plans to resume our annual US Go Congress in 2021, with as much play (both fun and serious) as always.

At this time, the AGA is recommending cancelling all in-person go events (both club meetings and tournaments) through the end of May, but feels that it is too soon to make recommendations about summer events, given that local conditions may vary.

Please stay safe and healthy

Continuing Recommendation on In-Person Play (6/6/2020)

The AGA believes that the health and safety of its members, and their communities, is a greater priority than in-person play. For this reason, the AGA is continuing to suspend all AGA-sponsored in-person events.

The AGA recognizes the value provided by in-person play and the camaraderie of Go communities. Because of this, we advise our members to follow all local laws as well as the advice and guidance of public health experts when deciding when and how to safely resume in-person play during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As always, the AGA encourages its members to play Go online. If you are looking for resources, check out [this list](#) of where to play go online, as well as [this list](#) of online resources, videos, and more. The AGA is developing more resources to help local Go communities stay connected and eventually resume safer in-person play. We are also in the early stages of planning online AGA events. If you have ideas (or online resources) that you want to share – for instance, things that have worked for your community – please consider writing an EJournal story (you can submit stories using [this form](#)) or sharing them with us through [this form](#). We plan to publish some of the best ideas in the near future.

AGA Budget 2020-2021

AGA Budget 2020-2021	Budget 20-21	Budget 19-20	Budget 18-19	Comments
Income				
Special Events				
Tournaments				
Pandamet				
Sponsorship	18,000	18,000	18,000	not confirmed
Expense	(16,200)	(18,000)	(16,200)	
Net	1,800	0	1,800	
International Tournaments				
Prizes	10,000	20,000	20,000	
Prizes Payments	(10,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	
Subsidies			2,000	
Net	0	0	2,000	
Other Events				
AGF Congress Support	0	3,500	3,500	Zero due to Covid 19 expense of cancelled congress to Covid 19
Go Congress Net***	(2,000)	10,000	5,000	
Total Special Events	(200)	13,500	12,300	
Regular Income				
Membership Income				
Individual Dues*	40,000	48,000	50,000	reduced due to lack of face to face tournaments driving member renewals
Chapter Dues	2,000	3,400	3,700	
Non-member tournament fees	500	2,000	2,000	reduced due to Covid 19
Total revenue from dues	42,500	53,400	55,700	
Investment Income**	7,000	9,000	8,500	
Revenue from sales, ads, broadcast	0	700	600	
Total Regular Income	49,500	63,100	64,800	
Other Income				
<u>Total Income</u>	<u>49,300</u>	<u>76,600</u>	<u>77,100</u>	
Expenses				
Administrative Expenses				
General	500	500	500	
Treasurer	10,800	4,000	1,000	Increase for prof. fees
President	1,500	2,000	2,000	

AGA Budget 2020-2021

Insurance	2,800	2,800	2,500	
IGF Membership	500	500	500	
Bank and Paypal Fees	2,000	2,500	2,300	
Total Administrative Expenses	18,100	12,300	8,800	
Communications Expenses				
E-Journal	12,000	15,000	15,000	
				subject to modest change based on needs for replacement equipment
Broadcast and Equipment	4,000	4,000	4,000	
Website	1,000	2,000	2,000	
New online contents for covid period	5,000			
Congress App Maintainance and Development	0	500	700	
Total Communications Expenses	22,000	21,500	21,700	
Program Expenses				
Tournaments				
US Open, Masters and NA Masters Support	0	12,000	13,500	
AGHS Support	500	500	500	
NA Kyu Championship	1,000	1,000	300	
Pair Go Events	0	500	500	
Total Tournaments	1,500	14,000	14,800	
Chapter Rewards	10,000	10,000	6,000	
International Travel				
WAGC Travel	0	2,000	1,000	
Pair Go Travel	0	2,500	1,000	
Total International Travel	0	4,500	2,000	
Equipment and Storage	3,000	3,000	3,500	
College Matching	300	300	500	
50 State Championship	1,000	2,000	2,000	2nd Half
New Programs	2,500			
Tournament Support program	5,000			
Total Program Expenses	23,300	33,800	28,800	
Professional Program Expenses				
Transatlantic Tournament	0	11,500		new event; not clear if 2nd NA championship, early 2021
Other Professional Tournaments	30,000	30,000	30,000	
Drawdown of Dedicated Reserves	(20,000)	(26,500)	(15,000)	Google funds individual support for NA championship resume soon
Additional Donations and Sponsorships	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	
Professional Qualification Tournament	0	12,500	12,500	
Professional Travel	0	3,000	3,000	
Total Professional Program Expenses	0	9,000	20,500	
Total Expenses	63,400	76,600	79,800	
Net Income	(14,100)	0	(2,700)	

AGA Budget 2019-2020

AGA Budget 2019-2020	Budget 19-20	Budget 18-19	Actual 18-19 (not final)	Comments
Income				
Special Events				
Tournaments				
Pandanet				
Sponsorship	18,000	18,000	18,000	
Expense	(18,000)	(16,200)	(15,914)	
Net	-	1,800	2,086	
International Tournaments				
Prizes	20,000	20,000	-	- Timing diff, no funds received
Prizes Payments	(20,000)	(20,000)	-	- Break in IMSA events
Subsidies		2,000	-	
Net	-	2,000	-	
Other Events				
Go Camp				
Fees	-	10,000	-	- no camp
Expenses	-	(10,000)	-	
Net	-	-	-	
AGF Congress Support	3,500	3,500	-	
Go Congress Net***	5,000	5,000	20,823	
Total Special Events	8,500	12,300	22,909	
Regular Income				
Membership Income				
Individual Dues*	48,000	50,000	48,030	
Chapter Dues	3,500	3,700	3,325	
Non-member tournament fees	1,500	2,000	1,370	
Total revenue from dues	53,000	55,700	52,725	
Investment Income**	9,000	8,500	7,635	
Revenue from sales, ads, broadcast	700	600	727	
Total Regular Income	62,700	64,800	61,087	
Other Income			79	
Total Income	71,200	77,100	84,074	
Expenses				
Administrative Expenses				
General	500	500	3,358	Code of conduct training for \$3,020
Treasurer	4,000	1,000	1,049	Increase for prof. fees
President	2,000	2,000	312	
Insurance	3,000	2,500	2,875	
IGF Membership	500	500	451	
Bank and Paypal Fees	2,500	2,300	2,510	
Total Administrative Expenses	12,500	8,800	10,556	
Communications Expenses				
E-Journal	15,000	15,000	14,466	
Broadcast and Equipment	4,000	4,000	372	
Website	2,000	2,000	823	
Congress App Maintenance and Development	500	700	-	
Total Communications Expenses	21,500	21,700	15,661	
Program Expenses				
Tournaments				
US Open, Masters and NA Masters Support	12,000	13,500	12,000	
AGHS Support	500	500	-	
NA Kyu Championship	1,000	300	1,042	
Pair Go Events	500	500	-	
Total Tournaments	14,000	14,800	13,042	
Chapter Rewards	10,000	6,000	8,360	
International Travel				
WAGC Travel	2,000	1,000	2,294	
Pair Go Travel	2,500	1,000	2,791	
Total International Travel	4,500	2,000	5,085	
Equipment and Storage	3,000	3,500	-	
College Matching	250	500	256	

AGA Budget 2019-2020

50 State Championship	2,000	2,000	500
Total Program Expenses	33,750	28,800	27,242
Professional Program Expenses			
Transatlantic Tournament	11,500		new event; not clear if 2nd
Other Professional Tournaments	30,000	30,000	- need NA championship
Drawdown of Dedicated Reserves	(26,500)	(15,000)	- Google funds
Additional Donations and Sponsorships	(10,000)	(10,000)	- individual support for NA championship
Professional Qualification Tournament	12,500	12,500	- resume soon
Professional Travel	3,000	3,000	-
Total Professional Program Expenses	9,000	20,500	-
Total Expenses	76,750	79,800	53,459
Net Income	(5,550)	(2,700)	30,615

*including current portion of multiyear and life memberships

**increasing interest rate environment, plus gradual investment of cash representing long term liabilities

***Net of all income and expense including AGF subsidy, except for prize subsidy