

## ICA Progress Report (July, 2011)

Here's some of what ICA has done in the past 2 ½ years:

**Built up and professionalized ICA:** More than 75 new volunteers are now involved in ICA serving on our Board of Directors, committees, task forces, and advisory groups. The group includes seven past presidents of ICA and new members recruited from throughout the state.

The Board has met every two weeks by conference call to address issues of basic governance and to plan and build new programs. Minutes and other governance documents are posted promptly on our website.

In January of 2010, the Board approved a comprehensive set of Bid and Tournament Guidelines intended to guard against conflicts of interest, improve and strengthen our bidding procedures, and clarify how major tournaments should be run. Some have said our guidelines may be the best in the nation.

In August of 2010, the Board approved a new Constitution and Bylaws for the Association which clarify and simplify the procedures for election, voting and selection of USCF delegates. The new constitution also revised and simplified our membership categories and the list of ICA-sanctioned championship tournaments. We've also made the constitution more accessible and comprehensible by reorganizing it and using plain English.

As in the past, Board and committee members serve without compensation.

**Website development:** Our website has been totally revamped, and hits on the site have nearly tripled, to 5,000 visitors a month. We have a rapidly growing list of article contributors. We have recently taken a look at websites of state chess associations around the country and believe our site is among the best. It now includes scanned issues of the Illinois Chess Bulletin dating back to 1979 and a searchable database of 20,000 games played by Illinois players dating to 1858. The games are in pgn format and can be replayed online. Many include commentary.

**Youth program and Chicago initiative:** ICA undertook a major commitment to youth chess in late 2009, and has built a thriving program. Our new Youth Committee is comprised of 30 top youth leaders from throughout the state. Most of the committee spent six months drafting content for a new Youth Resources section of our website which has drawn much praise. For an overview of our youth content, see [www.illinoisyouthchess.org](http://www.illinoisyouthchess.org).

ICA has also undertaken a major initiative to upgrade the chess program in Chicago's public schools. Our July 2011 proposal to Chicago's new leaders, available on our website, has been endorsed by virtually all of Illinois' titled players, both of the state's major chess coaches' associations, the Illinois Elementary School Association, the U.S. Chess Trust, and many of Illinois' private chess service providers.

The Warren Junior Scholars Program has also increased its activity, funding camp scholarships, hosting and funding group seminars, and sponsoring both the Denker and Girls invitational events. ICA also hosted a girls' state open tournament this year.

**Support for major tournaments:** ICA continues to sponsor and promote the two major Illinois adult championships: the Illinois Open and the Illinois Class, as well as the two major youth tournaments, the Illinois K-8 Championship and the Illinois All-Grade Championship.

**The Illinois Chess Tour.** The Board recently reinstated the Illinois Chess Tour, which should increase participation in Illinois' ten most prestigious events throughout the state and should bring an increase in membership and facilitate networking of Illinois players.

**Fiscal position:** Good fiscal management and an increase in memberships and contributions have dramatically improved our fiscal position. Our general fund has grown from \$2,677 on December 31, 2008 to \$11,989 on October 31, 2010. Total funds on hand in all of our programs grew during the same period from \$15,259 to \$27,556.

**Communication and outreach:** By building up our email lists and technical capacity, ICA now communicates on a regular basis with nearly 2,000 people statewide including members, coaches, organizers, service providers and program directors.