

I have been a local (Seattle) organizer since 1961, when I formed the University Washington Go Club. I have been active in national leadership capacities since 1986, when I directed the second US Go Congress in Seattle. I acquired sponsorship for and directed the first American Professional match in 1988. (Jimmy Cha 4p Vs Janice Kim 1P).

I welcome questions and comments. Email chrisk.aga@comcast.net Phone: 206-579-8071

I have served in the following AGA positions:

Congress Director 1986
NW coordinator 1989 – 2000
Congress Director 1995
Congress Liaison 1996 – present
Congress IT 1998 (Santa Fe)
Ranking Committee Chair 1999 – 2000
President 2000 – 2002
VP Operations – Executive VP 2006 – 2008
Congress Registrar 2005
VP Planning 2008 – 2012
Board of Directors September 2012 – present (appointed by Board to fill a vacancy)

Other Go related activities

Director – American Go Foundation 2000 – present
Director – Seattle Go Center 1995 – present
Director – Seattle Cherry Blossom and Japanese Cultural Festival 1980 – present

Recent Activities

My tenure on the Board has been brief, so most of the ideas expressed below have not yet come to fruition. Among other things, as Co-Director of the 2013 Congress, my time has been very much divided. However, these projects are long term. They will take at least many months to implement effectively.

I have introduced the concept of having Board committees provide oversight – and support – for various major areas of AGA interest and activity, such as membership management, tournament coordination, Go Congresses, Publications, etc. This was discussed by the board, and referred to committee (Steve Burrall and myself) for further work on development. I expect that work to continue if I remain on the Board.

I also sought, and have received the support of both the AGA and AGF Boards for establishment of a Go Teacher certification program based on completion of a specific training program and an accumulation of actual experience. The first Teachers workshop will occur at the Congress this year (see Congress website for details). The AGF is supporting this project with a \$1,000 grant. And the Korean Baduk Association is sending pros to participate as presenters at the workshop. The concept appears very popular, with 29 Congress registrants (11%) so far signing up for the workshop as well.

Historic activities and positions

I have been sensitive to issues related to regional differences. I worked hard to eliminate the now defunct 10 game rule requirement for certain tournaments, and to include on line qualifier competitions to give low density regions' players equal opportunity to compete for invitational tournaments. I also developed (with the assistance of Thomas Hsiang for the math involved) the current standard qualifier point system which selects players for invitations by recent results in qualifier tournament play.

My term as President was turbulent to say the least, and that experience has stimulated some of the ideas expressed below. However, I believe that enough time has passed to allow all to evaluate my proposals without undue influence by the burdens of past history.

In my mind, the board has three primary functions:

1. To provide oversight and guidance to the administration with respect to current issues.
2. To plan long term direction and strategy for future development
3. To formulate long term strategy to manage issues predictable in form, but not in detail.

Numbers 1 & 2 are the usual duties of any Board, and I expect to participate fully and effectively in discharging them. I am also running for the AGA Board for reasons, addressed below, related to #3.

Our institutional tools for management of conflict are crude and blunt.

Our history since the implementation of our current organizational structure in 2000 has seen ousters, recalls, and forced resignations. Each very disruptive to both the individuals involved and the organization. I believe we need institutional protocols to manage such conflicts less destructively.

The AGA has two operating elements: governance (The Board) and administration (The President and subordinates). The relationship between them is intimate, and generally friendly and cooperative. However, it is absolutely predictable that conflict will occasionally arise. Usually, people are able to sit down and work things out to the betterment of all concerned. Occasionally, such efforts fail. This is true in any organization so constructed, and more so when the organization is one of people whose basic nature is competitive. Our former President worked hard, deftly, and with great success, to head off, side-step, mitigate, and otherwise avoid such confrontations. And he is to be congratulated for both his efforts and success. Our current President has followed suit.

However, in an organization composed of competitively oriented people, we cannot expect such peaceful coexistence to last forever. On the Board, I will promote the creation of some formal rules of engagement designed to bring people to negotiate their differences before issues become critical, and prior to irretrievable actions being taken,. Such rules will provide protocols to resolve such issues when those involved are unable to reach agreement. This will usually avoid the need for drastic measures such as recall, dismissal, or forced resignation. Such a system may, or may not make it easier for individuals, but it will minimize the disruption of normal organization business. And that is our proper goal.

I raise it as an issue now because we have a time of comity and peace, during which we can formulate our protocols in a neutral way, without being under the influence of a current critical conflict, during which, regardless of good intent, it is impossible to be truly neutral.

We have recently formed a US/Canada based professional certification system within the AGA. This is a strong and powerful move forward. And, it is fraught with conflicting interests. There are obvious common interests as well – but those don't tend to cause problems. Just as above, between Board and Administration; we need some rules of governance to manage conflicts when they do arise. Here, even more, we need to recognize that such conflicts are primarily between legitimate interests of both sides, not between the people representing them. Resolution protocols need to recognize that fact, and encourage the actors in the drama to do so as well, and act accordingly.

In both cases, we need to avoid the comical mental process that sees no reason to fix the leak in the roof in Summer, because it is not leaking then. Yes, it is Summer now. Let us all give thanks to Allan, Andy and Myung Won. It will not always be so. Fixing a leaky roof in the rain in Winter is hard, but possible. Creating a neutral conflict management system in the midst of conflict is impossible.

Development of leadership in the AGA

Finally, I believe the AGA has been ignoring its best source of future leadership: the chapter organizers who actually do most of the work in expanding go at the local level. Their participation at the national level has been limited to one meeting a year, for which there is little prior preparation, and one election a year to elect Board members. I would like to see 3 additional chapter assembly meetings (by phone conference) with significant preparation by email, and the presentation of one or more resolutions to direct the interest of the Board, to be presented at the annual meeting at the Go Congress.

The success – or failure – of the Board to respond effectively to such resolutions would presumably have an effect on future elections, which would be a good thing in itself. But even more important, it would be natural for leadership in that venue to become more active in the national administration and/or Board. Creating a larger pool of national level organizers is a primary goal for us. I believe this is a good way to accomplish that.