Annual Meeting in Louisville proves to be a huge success

IN THIS ISSUE

2  A Note From The President
   Get to know Warren Jones

19  ‘Wild’ Bill Silves announces retirement
    Read what the legendary umpire had to say

35  Softball Teams Up With The NBA
    Associations in the Northwest promote through the Portland Trail Blazers
Hello softball friends, my name is Warren Jones and I was just installed as the President of ASA/USA Softball at the annual meeting in Louisville last month.

It is hard to put into words how excited and humbled I am to be serving as the President of this organization for the next two years. ASA/USA Softball holds a special place in my heart and has since I was a young man growing up in Ohio, where I played fast pitch softball for many years. I’ve been fortunate enough to be around ASA/USA Softball in a variety of roles and it’s undeniable the impact that softball has made in the lives of myself and my family.

We all know that ASA/USA Softball is the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States. There is no doubt that we are the leader in the sport of softball, however, in order to grow and take this organization to the next level, we must continue at the grassroots level. The grassroots level is where this organization’s heart lies through fast pitch and slow pitch softball, for adult and youth play. Our grassroots level not only supports our six National Teams, but also provides those teams with exceptional athletes. Without our 70 local associations’ hard work and dedication, none of it is possible.

Many challenges lie ahead to help take this organization to the next level. It is vital that we concentrate on keeping the teams and umpires that are registered currently, while going out there and recruiting people to umpire or join a team. Softball is a game for everybody and anyone can play. It’s our role to share with them why they should play ASA/USA Softball. As a membership based organization, we must continue to get out there and recruit new umpires and teams to be a part of our organization. After we recruit new umpires and teams, it is up to us to show them why ASA/USA Softball is the leader in the sport of softball. Our organization listens to coaches, teams, local administrators and anyone else with an opinion on how to make this game better. It shows each year at the Annual Meeting, where almost 300 Council Members travel from every corner of the United States to vote on new rule and code changes.

In Ohio, when people talk about softball, ASA/USA Softball is the only organization that comes to their mind. It is up to us to make that train of thought happen in every town all over the United States. Our name change will be huge in taking our organization to the next level. We are excited to become known as USA Softball. The name change will help recruit teams and umpires, while providing us with a huge branding opportunity. We’re not forgetting the past of the ASA, we’re embracing it as we move forward with the new name. Our roots will always be with the ASA.

Again, thank you for the honor of serving as President of ASA/USA Softball. I will do everything I can to make our Council Members, local organizations, teams and umpires proud to be a part of ASA/USA Softball.
Increase Your Field’s Performance

Arizona State University
2008 National Champions
Farrington Stadium, Tempe, AZ

Advancing the Evolution of Soil

26 Years Over 100,000 Projects 36 Countries www.StabilizerSolutions.com 800.335.2468
©2010 Stabilizer Solutions, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Check out these adorable softball snowmen that So Cal ASA/USA put together for their 2015 Rec Ball Meeting! The snowmen served as table decorations for the banquet in November.

Several ASA/USA Softball family members recently brought future softball players into the world recently! Sacramento ASA/USA's JO Commissioner, Cassi Ponzo, and her husband, Dan, welcomed Kaylee Alexis Ponzo (pictured left) in late October. Also, Maggie Combs, City of Salem (OR), and her fiance welcomed Stephen Robert Farrow (pictured right) aka ‘Robbie’ on November 23. Huge congrats to Maggie, Cassi and their families!
New Hampshire ASA/USA Softball held their Hall of Fame Luncheon on Saturday, November 21. They honored Mayre Colburn, Doug Dicey (New Hampshire ASA/USA Commissioner Emeritus) and Allison Hopley with beautiful glass awards. Congrats to all Hall of Fame inductees!

PICTURED ABOVE: Left to right, Mayre Colburn, Doug Dicey and Allison Hopley.

Do you have a photo you’d like to submit for the Inside Pitch? Submit your photos to ndorety@softball.org by the 20th of each month and you could be featured!

North Carolina ASA/USA Softball presented Morgan Pedley with the Ray Chandler Memorial Scholarship for $2,500. Pedley plays for the NC Thunder and for her high school, Lee County. She will be continuing her softball career at Barton College after graduating high school. Congrats Morgan! #PlayASA

PICTURED LEFT: Morgan Pedley, pictured center, was awarded the Ray Chandler Memorial Scholarship earlier this month.
Over 250 umpires from all across the United States were honored for their years of expertise, click here to check out the 2015 recipients of an ASA/USA Umpire Award.
RPS Bollinger and ASA ~
Teaming up together for more than 50 years!

Let our team help you insure your teams!

THREE EASY WAYS TO INSURE SOFTBALL:

1. Contact your ASA Commissioner. Visit www.ASASoftball.com for contact info
2. Contact RPS Bollinger Sports—ASA Department, Ph: 800-446-5311 • ASA@RPSins.com

RPS®
PROGRAMS
BOLLINGER SPORTS & LEISURE

1-800-446-5311
In January visit us at
www.RPSBollinger.com
Welcome!
Words from the editor of The Inside Pitch

Hello and welcome to the December 2015 issue of The Inside Pitch, the official newsletter of ASA/USA Softball!

First off, thank you for taking the time to read through this newsletter each and every month. The ASA/USA Softball Annual Meeting was a big success last month in Louisville. For me personally, it was a great opportunity to talk with many of you that I hadn’t met face to face before and talking about softball. The Annual Meeting also was very informative with all the meetings that I attended and listened in on. Parts of the game, including code and rule changes, don’t necessarily relate to my role on an every day basis, so it was nice to be able to learn more about these things while watching the Council in action. I was fortunate to run this year’s tradeshow and make sure that it was a success. I’d love to hear what you thought about this year’s show, positive and negative criticism, so that we can make sure to improve for next year’s. Everyone’s input is more than welcome.

As we wrap up 2015, I know that I have a lot to be thankful for personally. I’ve been blessed with the opportunity to travel all across the country this past year with the Junior Women’s National Team and watch them win the Gold. I also attended an MLB All-Star Game and Home Run Derby while representing and talking about ASA/USA Softball to our athletes. I’ve continued to be involved in the NCAA Women’s College World Series. I also made many new friends all across the country in many of you. I’d like to thank everyone for their thoughtfulness and kindess this past year. This will be my last issue of the Inside Pitch, as our new Communications Coordinator will be in charge of it, as I will be working in the Marketing department. I’m excited for the new role, which focuses on many of my strengths. It is going to be great to do new things that our department hasn’t been able to do in the past thanks to the role change.

I’d like to leave you with a couple of things. 2016 will be a big year filled with many challenges and triumphs for our organization. I’d like to encourage each of you to set goals for your local association. Push the limits and don’t be afraid to do something different. In order to make this organization great, we have to be willing to throw new ideas out there. Yes, some may not work for whatever reason, but some will and I can guarantee that. It’s like I told my little sister the other day when she asked a boy at her school to the winter formal where girls ask the guys. The worst anyone can say is ‘no.’ Brainstorm with your coaches, friends and others on how your association can get better. No one I’ve ever met has told me that they didn’t appreciate it when I asked for their opinion.

Best of luck to each of you in the new year. Remember that I’m still here for you!

Have a question for Nick Dorety?
Send it to ndorety@softball.org

PICTURED LEFT: Nick Dorety pictured dunking over his friend, Dan, at the Michael Jordan statue in Chicago.
SAVING YOU UP TO 15% AT ANY HOTEL IN THE HILTON HHONORS™ PORTFOLIO.

Your dream is our dream. As a proud sponsor of USA Softball and Team USA®, Hilton HHonors is helping you save up to 15% on your stay at any of our 10 distinct hotel brands. So no matter where your journey takes you, we have destinations in 90 countries ready to cheer you on. Come dream with us.

<<< BOOK NOW AT HHONORS.COM/SOFTBALL >>>
The 2016 season schedule at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex is now out

After a packed 2015 season, 2016 looks to be even more busy at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex. Several new events will be held, including Bedlam: Oklahoma State vs. Oklahoma and the MIAA Conference Championship. The Border Battle, the World Cup of Softball and the 18U GOLD National Championship all make their return to OKC in 2016. For a complete list of 2016 events, click here.

Local associations build their knowledge on RegisterASA

Savannah Edwards, Devin Loehrs and Steve Walker went to Texas in late October and Portland in November to teach the ‘ins and outs’ of RegisterASA with staff members of each association.

Join the 2016 USA Softball Legacy Club

The USA Softball Legacy Club provides financial support to the National Team programs. Membership is easy and grants you access into a fraternity along with World Champions and Olympic Gold Medalists. Every dollar donated makes a difference and goes directly towards supporting our international teams. Become a member today to support the Red, White and Blue. Click here to join!

Submit your best softball photo

Each week, we will feature our favorite photo as our cover picture on our Facebook page for ASA/USA Softball. The first feature comes from Patrick LeRoy, who captured third baseman Cleo Bailey throwing the ball to first base.

Staff member Larry Greeson retires

Greeson has served as facility maintenance for the ASA Hall of Fame and the National Office since 2006. Greeson plans to spend his retirement with family and traveling. Thanks for everything, Larry!

Staff members attend NFCA Convention

Kaycee Boles, Craig Cress, Chris Sebren and Destinee Martinez from the National Office attended the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) convention in Atlanta in early December. Pictured is the ASA/USA booth at the convention.
Ernie Yarbrough, an At-Large Player Rep for Georgia ASA/USA, went to Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands, in November with his family. While most people would have its beautiful beaches on their mind, Yarbrough and his son, Shaun, had other plans.

Weeks in advanced of his trip, he arranged to conduct a small softball skills clinic while in the islands. Eric Philbert, a local St. Thomas resident, is an NCAA softball umpire and good friend of Shaun’s. Both umpire for high school leagues and in numerous college conferences. Philbert was able to set up the clinic through Terry Chinnery, who coaches boys and girls softball and operates leagues in Tortola. The clinic was a huge success as 20 youth came out to learn.

“We made the proper arrangements to get the kids out of school so they could experience this opportunity to work with someone like Ernie Yarbrough who has spent more than 45 years around this game as a player and a coach,” said Chinnery. “I want to thank Coach Ernie and Shawn for this terrific experience.”

Chinnery stated how surprised he was that someone would sacrifice their time while on a cruise to work with kids on a ball field.

“It was a wonderful time,” said Yarbrough. “All of the kids worked hard and had a wonderful attitude. They were little sponges soaking up everything they possibly could. I was just so impressed watching these kids play with so much enthusiasm. Each participant and their parents thanked us personally for conducting the clinic.”

Yarbrough conducts clinics and camps throughout Georgia and operated a softball academy.

“This game has added so much to my life for nearly 50 years,” said Yarbrough. “I should attempt to give back to it whenever possible. Working with kids is the best way that I know how to.”

Yarbrough is planning with Chinnery for a more extensive camp in the future.
Ten ASA/USA Softball National Umpire Schools, including an Advanced National Umpire School for Fast Pitch, will take place across the country in 2016. The schools will take place in 10 states: California, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia.

Registration fees for National Umpire Schools vary by location. To register for an upcoming National Umpire School or an Advanced Umpire School, please contact the school coordinator as listed here. Please note that only certain schools are currently open for registration.

2016 ASA/USA Softball National Umpire Schools Schedule

2. Jan. 22-24, 2016 Burlington, NC
3. Jan. 29-31, 2016 Plant City, FL
4. Jan. 29-31, 2016 Halawa District Park, HI
5. Jan. 29-31, 2016 Tustin, CA
6. Feb. 12-14, 2016 Tupelo, MS
7. Mar. 4-6, 2016 Plainfield, IN
8. Mar. 18-20, 2016 Findlay, OH
10. Apr. 1-3, 2016 Ralston, NE
FP. June 14-19, 2016 Salem/Blacksburg, VA.
During the 2015 season, the City of Salem hosted three softball tournaments to raise money for the Linda L. Vladyka Breast Wellness Foundation. The foundation is dedicated to raising funds for education, research and the promotion of breast wellness and breast cancer issues.

In 2015, benefits from Play for a Cure Oregon fundraising tournaments totaled $6,800! The City of Salem plans to raise the bar another notch in 2016, as their goal is $10,000. You can support this cause by registering for and playing in one of the fundraising tournaments in 2016. The goal is for every team to donate $100 as well. The City of Salem will be giving out prizes to the team that donates the most during each tournament.

“Since 2008, we have raised a grand total of $54,501! This is possible only with the support of many people and teams over many seasons. I am honored to support this cause, as it is heading into its ninth year,” said Maggie Combs, Tournament Director.

For the complete list of 2016 tournaments, click here or contact pinkribbon@softballcityusa.com.
Being a family member of Team USA has it’s benefits.
Take advantage of partnership travel discounts.

United has flown Team USA for over 30 years, and we strive to be the airline of choice for Olympic family members as well. That’s why we offer discounted fares for USOC/NGB associated events. Go to united.com/USOC to book your flight, or to learn more.
New Hampshire ASA/USA Softball held their annual Hall of Fame Induction on Saturday, November 21. They honored two men: Glenn Colburn and Bob Hopley.

Colburn served as the state Umpire-In-Chief for 15 years and umpired in 14 ASA/USA National Championships. He earned his WBSC Certification in 1997, ASA Elite Umpire in 2003 and was awarded with an ASA/USA Award of Excellence in 2007. Colburn also played slow pitch softball. Needless to say, Colburn loved being around the game. Accepting the award on his behalf was his wife, Mayre Colburn and son, Jeffrey Colburn.

The second inductee was Bob Hopley, who passed away earlier in the year. Hopley was around New Hampshire ASA/USA in a variety of ways. He served as a district commissioner, umpired, was a player rep for 27 years combined and was the state Commissioner for eight years. Accepting the award on his behalf was his wife, Allison Hopley and additional family members.

Awards were presented by Doug Dicey, New Hampshire ASA/USA Commissioner Emeritus. The awards were made of glass in the shape of a softball diamond, with each men’s contributions engraved on it.

Whether you deck the halls, light the Menorah, gather around the Christmas tree or sing Silent Night, we wish you all the best this Holiday season. From the ASA/USA National Office Staff, Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year! May 2015 bring another year of fun, happiness and softball!
The first Golden Oldies World Softball Festival will take place in Hawaii in September 2016. The Golden Oldies is open to both Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch players over 35. From September 18-25 2016, softball athletes of all abilities are invited to attend the festival, which will be held on Oahu at the Patsy T Mink Central Oahu Regional Park and Sand Island grounds.

The Golden Oldies World Softball Festival is a week-long event where teams play others of a similar age and ability from around the world. The Golden Oldies functions and parties are just as important as the games. It shows as well, as food, beverages and entertainment will be provided at both the opening and closing functions. Trust us, you are guaranteed a week of fun, friendship and fraternity.

From the moment teams arrive in Hawaii, everything is taken care of. All packages include seven nights accommodation, an opening party and closing function at Germaine’s Luau (all inclusive), transfers to and from the games and functions, three days of Softball, a unique Festival souvenir and more. Team and individual entries are both welcome, as individuals are able to be placed with established teams.

For more information, click here or email softball@govsl.com.

Salem, Va. will be hosting one of the 2016 ASA/USA National Fast Pitch Umpire Camps from June 14-19, 2016. This is the only advanced school in the country offered to fast pitch umpires! It will provide you with an opportunity to improve your umpiring skills and will prepare you for higher level competition, all while working on your ‘elite umpire’ qualifications. Enrollment is limited to the first 60 accepted applications. For additional information regarding registration and housing, contact Randy Sprouse at (703)-507-8320 or vasportsnuts@yahoo.com.
As a member of USA Softball, you could receive exclusive savings on auto and home insurance from Liberty Mutual.¹

Join thousands of satisfied customers with Liberty Mutual Insurance.²

$ Discounted Rates—You could save up to $599.52 a year on auto insurance and receive additional discounts on home insurance.

Exceptional Service—Whether you’re in an accident or just need some advice, know we’ll always be on call for you.

Superior Benefits—Enjoy a number of superior benefits, such as 24-Hour Claims Assistance, Accident Forgiveness³, Roadside Assistance⁴ and Better Car Replacement⁵.

For a free quote, call 1-800-216-0304 or visit libertymutual.com/usasoftball

122324

The organization receives financial support for offering this auto and home benefits program.

¹Discounts are available where allowed by law and exclude policyholder discount. To be eligible for discount, each applicant must be individually underwriting, not all applicants may qualify.
²Based on Liberty Mutual Insurance Company 2016 Customer Satisfaction Survey in which more than 95% of policyholders indicated their initial and overall Liberty Mutual service experience was "excellent.
³"Better Car Replacement" is underwriting, not available in all states.
⁴"Accident Forgiveness" is underwriting, not available in all states.
⁵"Roadside Assistance" is available in all states. For a free quote, call 1-800-216-0304 or visit libertymutual.com/usasoftball.

Promoter: Liberty Mutual Insurance

©2016 Liberty Mutual Insurance

W112324January 30, 2018
In Memory
Celebrating the lives of our ASA/USA Softball family members

Leon Grunalt (Warren, Mich.) passed away on December 12 at the age of 79.

A Metro Detroit legend, Grunalt dedicated his life to softball, as he made an impact at the local, state and national level. From the 1970’s through the 1990’s, Leon managed some of the top slow pitch softball teams in the Metro Detroit area and the county – East Side Sporting Goods, Stroh’s, Burke’s Sport Haven, Budweiser, and the famed Nothdurft Softball teams. Through Leon’s leadership, his teams promoted and brought national recognition to the Master divisions – 35, 40 (45, 50 and over) at a time when the Masters divisions were in its infancy stages for ASA/USA Softball. If you were involved in softball, you knew Leon! He had a love and passion for the game of softball that continued throughout his life!

Many of his accomplishments are remarkable and may not ever be matched in the future, as he managed 10 ASA National Championships while compiling a national tournament record of 63-5 (.926 winning percentage). Under Leon’s managerial leadership, Nothdurft teams won 37 consecutive games at ASA National Tournaments.

Grunalt was inducted into the ASA/USA National Softball Hall of Fame in November, 2012 at the Annual Council Meeting in Dallas, Texas. He became the 28th manager inducted into the National Hall of Fame. He is only the second manager from Michigan joining fellow Metro Detroiter Roy Lombardo, who was inducted in 1988. Grunalt was inducted into the Metro Detroit Hall of Fame and Honor in 1994.

Hall of Fame Bio:

Leon Grunalt began his softball career in 1955 on a local fast pitch team. After developing a love for the game, he began his managerial career with local Detroit teams. After several successful seasons within local travel leagues, Grunalt found success in 1984 when his Budweiser sponsored team won the ASA Men’s 35 and over National Invitational. After ASA sanctioned this category in 1985, Grunalt’s team went on to win the National title for two consecutive years. Then, in 1988, Grunalt joined forces with Karl and Fred Nothdurft and with new sponsorship the Nothdurft slow pitch team was created. Under his leadership, the team won 37 consecutive games, compiled a record of 63-5 in national championship play and earned seven National titles. Grunalt managed nine ASA Slow Pitch National Championship teams before retiring in 1994. Grunalt has been a member of the Metro Detroit ASA Hall of Fame since 1994.
The Seattle Metro Softball Umpires Association collected toys for the ‘Toys for Tots’ cause at a chilly December tournament. Fun was had by coaches, athletes and umpires.

As Kayleen Dunson, Seattle ASA/USA Umpire-In-Chief, stated, “this is why I love umpiring. A two hour drive to the ballpark to arrive before dawn, a charity tournament for Toys for Tots and creating stories of a lifetime with great friends.”

Seattle umpires were not the only ones that enjoyed spending time during this holiday season at the ballpark, as Arizona ASA/USA Softball also held a ‘Toys for Tots’ tournament. Thirty-seven teams across four age divisions came out to Rose Mofford Softball Complex for the annual December tournament. Once again, hundreds of toys were raised and fun was had by all in both Seattle and in Arizona.

Region 15 Umpire-In-Chief (UIC), ‘Wild’ Bill Silves has decided to step down at the end of 2016. Silves has served as the Regional UIC for over 13 years. Here is what Silves had to say about his retirement.

“Well the day has come for me to step down as region 15 UIC. I have told the region that 2016 will be my last year. It is time for someone else to step up and take us to the next level. It has been a fun 13 years, No, it has been a great 13 years. We have some of the best umpires in the USA. We are 1,600 of the best people and umpires in ASA /USA softball. I am a lucky guy to call each of you friend. I will be around watching all of you go to the highest level. I hope all of you will always be proud to say, “I’m from Region 15 in the Great Northwest.” In short I have 4 Grand Kids and they come first. Besides it is someone else’s turn.

Again, thanks for the ride, it has been great!

Wild Bill Silves
The Great Northwest, Region 15 UIC
ASA/USA
SPRING MEANS A FRESH START & A FRESH FUNDRAISING GUIDE FILLED WITH GOODIES SUCH AS
SCRATCH CARDS
CUSTOM SPORTS APPAREL
ONLINE MAGAZINE FUNDRAISER
OFFICIALLY-LICENSED SPORTS TEAM TUMBLERS
PRETZEL RODS + MORE

GET YOUR FREE FUNDRAISING GUIDE TODAY
1.866.830.5014 • FUNDRAISING.COM/ASA
Eight individuals received softball’s highest honor to the National Softball Hall of Fame at the 35th Annual celebration at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville, Ky.

A night to remember, the 2015 class consisted of Bonnie Anderson (Springfield, Ore.) - Umpire - Posthumous, John Davide (Centerreach, N.Y.) - Slow Pitch Player, Andy Dooley (Thaxton, Va.) - Commissioner, Sue Enquist (San Clemente, Calif.) - Meritorious Service, Mark Ingrao (Falls Church, Va.) - Umpire, Charles Moss, Sr. (Lanexa, Va.) - Meritorious Service, Steve Padilla (Manteca, Calif.) - Fast Pitch Player and Mike White (Eugene, Ore.) - Fast Pitch Player.

Rewatch the 2015 National Softball Hall of Fame Induction ceremony.

Here are several of our favorite quotes from each of the inductees:

“I’d like to thank the ASA for this incredible honor from the bottom of my heart.” - John Davide

“When I got the call from a Past President asking me if I would consider running for President of the ASA, I was shocked that they would even think that I could do that.” - Andy Dooley

“It is every athlete’s dream to wear the Red, White & Blue...that is not possible without the ASA.” - Sue Enquist

“This is our Cooperstown. I am forever indebted to be included in this Hall of Fame.” - Sue Enquist

“The greatest thrill of my career was working Umpire clinics.” - Mark Ingrao

“One of the major weaknesses that I have is that I try to be perfect. When I make an error or feel that I messed up, I am very hard on myself.” - Bonnie Anderson in a previous interview as read by her close friend, Karen Meats

“Many of my anniversaries were spent at a softball field. Thank you to my wife.” - Charles Moss Sr.

“Those of us who have played softball are so lucky to be associated with ASA/USA Softball. Thank you for this special night.” - Steve Padilla

“I just have to repeat what they said earlier. My name is Steve Padilla and I’m in the ASA National Softball Hall of Fame forever.” - Steve Padilla

“Everything happens for a reason and everything is what you make of it.” - Mike White

Class of 2016 National Softball Hall of Fame inductees

Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla.) - Meritorious Service
Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif.) - Fast Pitch Player
Harry Haroian - (Melvindale, Mich.) - Fast Pitch Player
Peter Meredith (Salt Lake City, Utah) - Fast Pitch Player
John Nelson (Dalton, Ga.) - Umpire
Tom Penders (Narragansett, R.I.) - Fast Pitch Player
Terry Peterson (Omaha, Neb.) - Sponsor
Mick Renneisen (Bloomington, Ind.) - Meritorious Service.
Annual Meeting Gallery

See some of our favorite pictures from Louisville, Ky.
Annual Meeting Awards
Congrats to all of the following and thank you for all your hard work.

SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

FIVE YEARS: SHAWN BAILE, CALIFORNIA PARKS & RECREATION SOCIETY, HERMAN GARZA, JESSICA HICKS, FRANK KOLAREK, MIKE MCCROBIE, CASSI PONZO, TOM RAUSCH, SUZANNE ROBISON, STEVE ROSCIA, BARRY ROSS, CAROLYN SHAFER, JOHN TURNBULL, GARY YOUNG

10 YEARS: DALE E. FERRON, RICK HANSEN, BRIAN HICKEY, JACK HUTCHERSON, STEVE ROLLINS, BILL SKINNER, JAMES VILLARREAL

15 YEARS: BOB ADAMS, MIKE BLONDINO, BOB CALDWELL, DAN DUFFY, GARY EVANS, SCOTT GAGNON, MANUEL GOMEZ, GENE HARRISON, DAVE MAUSDELY, DAVID PERSING, TOM TOPPING, JIM VOYLES, MIKE WELLS

20 YEARS: MIKE CAPPA, MIKE DISHER, GLENN MORRISON, DAVID MAURY, NATIONAL CONGRESS OF STATE GAMES

25 YEARS: STU ALDERMAN, JOHN GOUEIA, JUDY SHERMAN, JERRY STEWART

30 YEARS: DONN ADDANTE, TOMMY BARRETT, BILL HUMPHREY, TONY LAWS, GLEN PAYNE, SR., BERNIE PROFATO, JOE WALKER

35 YEARS: VIRGIL ACKERSON, ED AUSTIN, GUY DEMAIO, ANGELO FRANICOLA, ROCKE A. IZZO, WALT SPARKS

40 YEARS: G. PAT ADKISON, RONNIE BURKHOLDER

45 YEARS: DOUG DICEY, RICHARD B. SMITH, CLIFF WARRICK

50 YEARS: VINCE SCAMARDELLA

60 YEARS: DON SNYDER

BENCHMARK AWARDS
Dallas ASA/USA • Delaware ASA/USA • Minnesota ASA/USA
New York ASA/USA • Piedmont ASA/USA

REGISTRATION AWARDS
Increases in two of three categories (Adult Teams, Youth Teams, Umpires)
DALLAS ASA/USA (Dave Devine)

Most Total Registrations
8,561
So California ASA/USA (Phil Gutierrez)

Most JO Registrations
6,246
So. California ASA/USA (Phil Gutierrez)

Most Adult Registrations
3,372
Michigan ASA/USA (Jerry Hanson)

Most Umpire Registrations
1,659
Pennsylvania ASA/USA (Andy Loechner Jr.)

JAMES FARRELL AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

THIRTEEN OF THE HIGHEST RATED TOURNAMENTS
Burlington, North Carolina

SEVEN OF THE HIGHEST RATED TOURNAMENTS
Happy Valley, Oregon

FOUR OF THE HIGHEST RATED TOURNAMENTS
Salem, Virginia

THREE OF THE HIGHEST RATED TOURNAMENTS
Medford, Oregon

TWO OF THE HIGHEST RATED TOURNAMENTS
Blooming, Indiana • Clovis, California • Rochester, Minnesota • Salem, Oregon

ONE OF THE HIGHEST RATED TOURNAMENTS
Ashland, Ohio • Auburn, Alabama • Boise, Idaho • Bowling Green, Kentucky

Brown Arrow, Oklahoma • Canton, Ohio • Cape Girardeau, Missouri
Columbus, Georgia • Fargo, North Dakota • Findlay, Ohio
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin • Forsyth, Illinois • Hayward, California • Kent, Washington
Normal, Illinois • Prescott, Arizona • Rapid City, South Dakota • Rolls, Missouri
Roseville, California • Sioux Falls, South Dakota • Spartanburg, South Carolina
Springfield, Missouri • Sterling, Virginia • Tupelo, Mississippi • York, Pennsylvania
Yuma, Arizona

JAMES FARRELL CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE
Dallas, Texas • Hillsboro, Oregon • Kendalville, Indiana
Santee, California • Watertown, South Dakota
Several athletes have accepted an invitation to attend the 2016 USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Camp (WNTSC). The WNTSC is slated to be held January 2-8, 2016 at Bill Barber Park in Irvine, Calif., those athletes who accepted will compete for a spot on the WNT roster that will compete at the World Cup XI, the XV World Baseball Softball Confederation Women’s World Championship in Surrey, B.C., Canada and the Japan Cup.

Additional athletes may be invited to the USA Softball WNTSC at a later date. During the selection process, athletes will participate in position drills as well as simulated games and be evaluated by the Women’s National Team Selection Committee.

Click here to see the athletes who will try out for the Women’s National Team

For updates on the USA Softball Women’s National Team and events throughout the 2016 season visit www.ASAUSASoftball.com.
Athletes Identified

A list of athletes have been identified for the National Team athlete pool following their participation at the 2015 USA Softball Junior Olympic (JO) Cup in Chino Hills, Calif. Twenty-eight teams competed in the inaugural event, which served as an identification opportunity for athletes wishing to compete in front of members of the Women’s National Team Selection Committee (WNTSC). In addition to an identification opportunity, teams competed for a prize pool with the top finishers receiving a cash donation award back to their participating 501c3 program.

Click here to see the list of athletes identified by the WNTSC.

“The opportunity that our players got from playing in the USA Softball JO Cup was amazing,” said Texas Bombers Gold Head Coach Scott Smith. “This tournament showcased our players to the Women’s and Junior Women’s National Team coaches in a quality run and competitive event. We absolutely can’t wait for this next year’s event in 2016.”

16U Division Added To the USA Softball JO Cup

This newly added division will join the 18-Under age group starting in the 2016 season. There will be 32 teams from each division of play.

“When we launched the USA Softball JO Cup, we listened to our customers, teams and coaches and tried to give them what they desired,” said ASA/USA Softball Director of Championships Chris Sebren. “We had a great event for our 18-Under teams in Chino Hills, Calif. and have built off that success with ongoing discussions over the last several months with our coaches. Adding the 16-Under age division to provide additional National Team identification opportunities came out of those discussions, so we are moving forward with that division for this coming year.”

Invitations will go out at the beginning of the 2016 season to the top teams in the 16-Under and 18-Under divisions, with 32 of the nation’s elite softball clubs competing in the event. Hosted by Georgia ASA/USA Softball, invitations for the USA Softball JO Cup will be sent out based on prominent ranking systems.

“The addition of a 16-Under Division allows ASA/USA Softball to provide another great opportunity for our Team USA Coaching Staff to evaluate potential Junior and National Team talent,” said Women’s National Team Head Coach Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla.). “It doesn’t get any better than seeing this talent pool in a very competitive environment.”
You're not just buying lights. You're buying an affordable system that reduces energy and maintenance costs year after year. That means while decreasing wasted energy, you'll save money and help protect the environment for her future.

To learn more visit: www.musco.com/generations
With a crowd of 120 in attendance, Delaware ASA/USA Softball inducted its newest Hall of Fame members at the 16th annual Delaware ASA/USA Hall of Fame induction held at Holloway Terrace Fire Hall in New Castle.

**Inductees:**

**Robert ‘Bobby’ Herman:** He began his playing career as a catcher during the Great Depression. Prior to World War II, Herman played for the Bethlehem Steel. After becoming a Private in the Army, he was awarded a certificate of merit for pitching his team to a second place finish in a tournament held in Great Britain. Herman went onto pitch for several more fast pitch teams over the years and is considered a legend in men’s fast pitch to this day in Delaware.

**Robbie Maloney:** He was one of Delaware’s most prolific slow-pitch players over a three decade span. He earned the nickname ‘Mr. Consistent’ at the plate as he struck fear in each pitcher that faced him. TSN Softball News named him “the best in Delaware.” His teams were always successful, however he helped take the ‘Amtrak’ to the next level, capturing five state Championships and several world tournaments. Maloney still stays involved, umpiring both slow and fast pitch.

**Steve Simione:** Simione served as a wonderful contributor to the game as a player, coach, umpire and league coordinator. During a 10 year run with the Rappa Softball Club, his teams went 342-161, while capturing one league championship in 1991 and finishing second three other times. He tallied over 600+ wins in his career. Simione was also an active umpire for many years, served as President and also was a player representative on the Delaware ASA/USA council.

**Gary Starkey:** One of the most solid players for many years in Delaware, his defensive knack in the outfield earned him the nickname the ‘Falconet Cannon.’ He played both slow-pitch and modified softball. He was known for his bat at both levels, in which he blasted over 900 combined home runs in the two levels of play. In 1998, he led his team to the National Championship. TSN Softball News named him the ‘player of the decade’ in the 1980s. After a 20 year break, his final at-bat was a home run.

**Gary Emeigh:** His impact was as close to immeasurable as an athlete’s could possibly be. Emeigh hit 1,300 home runs in his career. Emeigh helped carry the Delaware Lawmen to the ASA/USA Class A National Championship in the mid-1980s. He was named to the TSN Softball News 1980s all decade team.

**Mike Rowe:** Rowe was best known for his exceptional umpiring career, which started back in 1966 in Wilmington. He umpired at the Philadelphia Navy Base for several years before beginning with Delaware ASA/USA in 1989. He held several umpiring positions of authority. His honest personality helped hundreds of umpires become consistent on the diamond.
All Things Softball

Get 5% Back on Bats, Gloves, Cleats & More When You Join The League by Sports Authority

sportsauthority.com
New Commissioner
Natalie Norman steps to the plate with over 20 years of experience

Natalie Norman (Montgomery, Ala.) has been appointed as Commissioner for the Alabama ASA/USA Softball association. Norman steps into the role of Commissioner with over 20 years of Parks and Recreation experience, with the majority of those years spent at the City of Montgomery Parks and Recreation Department.

“Words fall somewhat short of expressing how honored I am to have the opportunity to serve as the Alabama ASA/USA Softball Commissioner,” said Norman. “I have enjoyed 23 years as a Parks and Recreation professional and working with ASA/USA on local, state, and national levels. It is truly a privilege to have been selected, and I look forward to being part of a great team serving the participants of Alabama. As we approach 2016, I am sincerely excited to start playing ball!”

Norman has been involved with ASA/USA Softball for many years, having served in the Parks and Recreation field for over 20 years. She has been heavily involved in the planning, coordination and promotion of softball while also helping to foster and nurture the grass-roots programs in the area. She has served on the Alabama Recreation and Parks Association Board of Directors and has also been a member of the Alabama ASA/USA Softball Board of Directors since January of 2013. During her time at the City of Montgomery Parks and Recreation, she has helped facilitate almost 30 ASA/USA National Championships, numerous ASA/USA leagues and tournaments and has hosted multiple District and State Championships.

Catch up with the latest ‘Respecting the Rules of the Game’ article by Coach Mike Candrea. Candrea’s knowledge of the game has been proven at both the NCAA and international level. His teams have won eight NCAA Women’s College World Series titles and two Olympic Head Coach. Click here to catch up with the latest article.
‘Nick’s pics’
Photos from around the country during 2015

Submit your favorite photos to Nick Dorety, ndorety@softball.org
The following speech was written by Tommy Orndorff, National Softball Hall of Famer inducted in 2014, who served as the guest speaker at the Champions Officials Association Christmas Banquet.

Believe me, when I say, I am more surprised than you are that I am standing here before you tonight. Imagine my surprise 10 days ago, when I got a call from Randy asking me to be the guest speaker tonight at, of all things, an umpire banquet. I am probably the last person you guys want to listen to when you have an evening out, celebrating with your peers and enjoying the holiday spirit that is so apparent this time of year. At one time or another, most of you have probably dealt with me on the softball field and I am sure that it has not always been on exchange of pleasantries.

A coach and umpires? Kinda like oil and vinegar! Not quite the perfect mix. A coach and umpires? Who would have thought it? Certainly, not me! But, nevertheless, here I am.

So I said to Randy, 'what the topic?' Randy said 'Oh, just tell 'em what you look for in a quality umpire.' I replied 'so, my next question, what kind of time limit are we looking at?'

Randy said about 15 or 20 minutes.

And my thoughts initially were "you kidding me!" If it's anything like my exchanges on the field of play, I've got no chance. I don't have a chance. I'm in a no-win situation.

All kidding aside, I am honored to be addressing the men and women here tonight who help make this game the game that it is today, the greatest sport in the world: in my bias opinion...fast pitch softball. I would like to touch on two or three things tonight, so please bear with me. First, a little bit about myself.

I have given my life to the sport, for over 50 years now. I joined my first team when I turned 21, beginning in the Vienna Pigtail-Ponytail house league program with the Virginians. I started with the Shamrocks in 1972, which became one of the elite teams in the country. From day one, the Shamrocks were the real deal. We won the ASA 18U Gold National Championship in 2005, coming back after playing in the same game in 2003, coming up just short as we lost to the Batbusters in the Championship. We were a ‘final five’ team eight times over a 21 year stretch, an unprecedented accomplishment for anyone outside the state of California. We played hard and with a purpose, putting the east coast on the map in girls fast pitch softball. I do not believe that our success will ever be duplicated east of the Mississippi. I’m talking ever and for that matter, outside the state of California.

It has never been about me. It has always been about my players, as I have always done what is best for the team. Always! I truly believe that is the main reason that my teams have enjoyed the success that they have. We have played the game the right way and just as importantly, for the right reasons. We respect our opponents, the umpires, ourselves, our teammates and our coaches. Most importantly, we respected the game itself.

We played hard and with a purpose. Nobody played the game harder or with more drive and determination. We played with passion for 22 straight years, as we continued to earn berths to ASA 18U National Championships. That, in itself, is amazing!

I love the game. I love teaching the game. I love competing against the best. I love teaching life lessons through our experiences both on and off the field of play. I love everything that the game entails. I always have and always will.

The same can be said for my teams at O’Connell High School. I am a demanding coach and at the same time, very respectful. This is my 31st year at O’Connell, after giving 39 years of my life to the Shamrocks. It has been a great run in both venues. That tells you a little bit about myself and my teams, the Shamrocks and O’Connell. That brief history of my background, let me go in a different direction now.

So, qualities that I appreciate when judging an umpire? After giving it careful thought, I have put together a ‘Top 10’ list in evaluating an umpire or umpires:

1. Personal Appearance. You have to Look the part
2. Presence. How do you carry yourself? Do you show confidence?
3. Knowledge of the rules and how to apply them
4. Knowing the strike zone and being consistent in your calls
5. Being in the right position to make the right call
6. Not anticipating a call, taking your time and making the right call
7. Be decisive, leaving no doubt when you make the call
8. Good mechanics truly separate the great ones for the good
9. Consistency in all your calls
10. Being invisible. The good ones are invisible. It is not about you the umpire
Each year, the new rule book has one or two new ‘points of emphasis.’ Let me share with you my two ‘points of emphasis’ that I would like to see addressed:

1. The Batter’s Box. Currently it’s dimensions are three feet by seven feet, with 4 feet basically being our front. Recognize that for a player to be out of the box, the foot must actually touch the ground outside the box. Any player who lines up with their back foot even with the plate or close to it, is not going to be out of the batter’s box as they take their regular stride to the pitch. Slappers pose another problem, but the same holds true. To make that call, the foot has to touch outside the box before an out call can be made. Four feet from the back edge of the plate is a great distance.

2. The Strike Zone. Know the strike zone! The rule book defines it as the space over home plate, which is between the batter’s forward armpit and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance. Any part of the ball passing through the strike zone in flight shall be considered a strike. The umpire shall determine the batter’s strike zone according to the batter’s usual stance when swinging at a pitch. It’s very plain and simple. It says nothing about giving the pitcher a ball off the plate. One umpire that I respect immensely make that wrong observation at a recent clinic. My thinking is that umpires have taken that statement and ran with it. In doing so, they have developed strike zones outside that are making it impossible for hitters to hit. Now, some zones are two, three and four balls off the plate. The hitter has no chance. Call it by the book! And the book says nothing about ‘a ball off the plate.’

It has been written many times, many ways, but the most difficult thing to do in all sports is hitting a baseball or softball. Think about that, just for a moment. The most difficult thing to do in all of sports is hitting a baseball or softball. To appreciate that difficulty, just step in the batter’s box and give it a try. I think that you will be surprised. For perspective, just think about how difficult is it to hit a golf ball and it is lying still on a tee or on the golf course. Add to it velocity and movement, which the good ones possess. Believe me when I say, they do not need any help. Just call it by the book, where it is clearly defined.

Lastly the health of today’s game disturbs me. It very well count be on a path of self-destruction. That may seem over-stated to many. I blame it on a number of things, from early verbals to the showcase mentality that is stripping us of competitors in today’s society. The biggest culprit however is the dollar bill. Coaches are expected to be paid for their service, while entry fees have skyrocketed at your premiere invitational tournaments across the country. Tournaments with time limits, where teams rarely get in more than five innings. It’s all about the dollar bill.

Rarely do today’s teams play for anything unless they are attending a National Qualifier or a National Tournament. They play at showcases, hoping to attract the attention of the college coaches. Nothing is at stake, just further promoting an ‘all about me’ mentality. Coaching is not what it used to be, especially on the travel ball circuit. And not just locally, nationally. I coached the Shamrocks for 39 years and I was not paid to do so. The quality of play is down as a result of it. No longer are we teaching the game and life lessons along the way. There is none, or very little, teaching truly going on. Believe me when I say the game is in bad shape.

Parents are worse than ever, dragging their daughters from team to team in hopes of securing a scholarship at the collegiate level. Their negativity in the bleachers is slowly making its way from the stands to the dugouts and the field of play. It is not a healthy environment.

A concern for myself being a scholastic coach is that the participation numbers for the sport that I love are down across the board. Most high schools locally are having trouble fielding both a Varsity and a Junior Varsity team. Too many of today’s girls are no longer finding it enjoyable to be a pitcher. By the time they reach high school, they no longer have a desire to play. It is not a good situation! Not at all!

These are just my thoughts! They are controversial to some, I’m sure. But, then again, I am just telling it like it is from my perspective. As umpires, you have a thankless job. I do not envy you!

As the old saying goes, I have been there and done that. I was an umpire before I was ever a head coach in softball, trying to earn some spending money for college. That was with Bill Watkins’s Northern Virginia Umpires Association back in the late 60’s. I believe that I made something like five dollars a game, maybe even ten per game. I loved doing it too, however that was a different time and a different era.

I know that a number of you wear a lot of different hats doing what you do, whether it is for ASA/USA or other softball organizations. To my estimation, the gold standards is still ASA/USA, the home of the National Softball Hall of Fame, our USA National Teams, including our 2020 USA Olympic Softball Team. I have been as ASA/USA advocate for an eternity now and I have loved every minute of it. I thank you for what you do today and perhaps, more importantly, I respect you for what you are doing. It’s a great game and let’s keep it that way.

Thank you!
USA SOFTBALL LEGACY CLUB

EVERY DONOR MAKES A DIFFERENCE.
BE A PART OF OUR LEGACY!

THE USA SOFTBALL LEGACY CLUB PROVIDES FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL TEAM PROGRAMS AND ATHLETES THROUGH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP GIVING. THESE CONTRIBUTIONS ASSIST IN SUPPORTING COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH TRAINING TEAMS FOR INTERNATIONAL PLAY AND TRAVEL FOR COMPETITION. LEGACY CLUB MEMBERS ARE FRIENDS, ALUMNI AND ADVOCATES OF USA SOFTBALL WHO RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF CONTINUING THE LEGACY ESTABLISHED BY THOSE IN THE PAST WHO HAVE WORN THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE.

USA SOFTBALL LEGACY CLUB MEMBERSHIP IS EASY AND GRANTS YOU ACCESS INTO A FRATERNITY ALONG WITH WORLD CHAMPIONS AND OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALISTS. EVERY DOLLAR DONATED MAKES A DIFFERENCE AND GOES DIRECTLY TOWARDS SUPPORTING OUR INTERNATIONAL TEAMS.

NEW MEMBERS CAN JOIN ANYTIME THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND START TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE MANY BENEFITS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE USA SOFTBALL LEGACY CLUB.

TO FIND OUT MORE OR TO JOIN FOR JUST $100, CONTACT US AT (405) 425-3422, LegacyClub@softball.org OR VISIT USASoftball.com AND SELECT LEGACY CLUB UNDER THE TEAM USA.
Each year, Southern California ASA/USA holds clinics for umpires in preparation for the upcoming season. This year proves no different. To gear up for the 2016 season, the SoCal umpire staff is putting on six mechanics clinics and three rules clinics. The first mechanics clinic was held at the beginning of December. Each clinic provides participating umpires with a full day of training sessions. Umpires work on base and plate mechanics in numerous scenarios that may occur. Staff teaches proper movement, angle, distance and timing of calls in both the two and three umpire systems. Umpires also use pitching machines to practice proper mechanics at the plate involving strike zone and calling.

Umpires of all ages and levels of experience attend. Each year SoCal clinics register over 700 different umpires and expect to do so again with the 2016 clinics. Interested in participating in a camp? Click here for more information. Follow SoCal umpires all year by following their Twitter page.

Gear up for the Holiday season with the latest USA Softball swag

If you ask us, the best gift under the Christmas tree this year is anything from Softball Outlet! Get ready for the 2016 softball season ahead of time. Make sure to check out the latest featured items on online!
Portland ASA/USA has teamed up with the local National Basketball Association’s (NBA) Portland Trail Blazers to promote softball this NBA season. The Trail Blazers are hosting their first annual Amateur Softball Association Nights at the Moda Center.

The first ASA night was held on November 24, as the Trail Blazers hosted the Chicago Bulls. The second night will be February 23 against the Brooklyn Nets, with ASA fans getting the exclusive chance to watch the players warm up before the game. Fans are able to purchase tickets at a discounted rate using an ASA specific promo code.

Fans who attended the November game through the ASA shot a free throw on the court after the Trail Blazers lost to the Bulls 93-88. Mike Wells (Commissioner of Oregon ASA/USA) and Dan Bennett (Portland JO Commissioner) operated a booth on the main concourse, as thousands of fans walked by. They gave away a lot of softball items and held drawings for several gift cards.

This is a fantastic way to generate interest in ASA/USA Softball and can result in many new registrations for your local leagues next year. When you are at an event, don’t just tell them about ASA/USA Softball, ask them to join and walk them through how to register and join a team. Take a fantastic opportunity like this and try to correlate that into registrations for your association. Wells said that they used social media and e-mail blasts through Register ASA to promote the Trail Blazers night. “The Trail Blazers staff made it extremely easy to set up and even made promotional flyers for us.”

Interested in hosting a night at your local NBA or professional team’s home games, Wells suggests to simply just contact their ticketing or marketing departments. “We had a great time and are looking forward to the next one in February,” said Wells. “We are looking to have a couple of our local National and college athletes come out and sign autographs.” Ticketing offices are always looking for new and creative ways to bring more fans to games.
KEEP UP WITH ALL THE LATEST ON YOUR CELL PHONE

ASAUSASASoftball.com | SoftballOutlet.com
OfficialGear.com | Facebook-ASAUSASoftball
Twitter-ASAUSASoftball | Instagram-USASoftball
Snapchat-ASAUSASoftball
As a member of USA Softball, you could receive exclusive savings on auto and home insurance from Liberty Mutual.¹

Join thousands of satisfied customers with Liberty Mutual Insurance.²

$ Discounted Rates—You could save up to $589.52 a year on auto insurance and receive additional discounts on home insurance.

Exceptional Service—Whether you’re in an accident or just need some advice, know we’ll always be on call for you.

Superior Benefits—Enjoy a number of superior benefits, such as 24-Hour Claims Assistance, Accident Forgiveness³, Roadside Assistance⁴ and Better Car Replacement⁵.

For a free quote, call 1-800-216-0304 or visit libertymutual.com/usasoftball

122324

The organization receives financial support for offering this auto and home benefits program.

¹ Discount rates are available where state laws permit and underwriting and policy terms and conditions apply. To the extent permitted by law, applicants must be individually underwriting out all applicants may qualify.

² Based on Liberty Mutual Insurance Company’s 2016 Defender’s Report. All statistics are through June 2016 of policyholders enrolled in their indebtedness. Liberty Mutual offers a comprehensive auto and homeowners insurance package, including auto/property insurance and homeowners insurance. 

³ Exclusive discounts and/or savings based on policies purchased.

⁴ For qualifying customers only. Accident Forgiveness applies to new Liberty Mutual collision and comprehensive policies only. Liberty Mutual is not responsible for any claims you or your approved claim adjuster would be required to pay under your policy. 

⁵ Liberty Mutual offers a comprehensive auto and homeowners insurance package, including auto/property insurance and homeowners insurance. 

©2016 Liberty Mutual Insurance

Wakefield, January 2016