“Never in my life did I imagine wearing this jersey for as long as I have, but this year was truly the most special of them all.”
- Haylie McClaney

Read more on page 5

“What started out as a simple challenge given to Dora Martínez (San Antonio, Texas) would ultimately lead to an international umpire resume that now includes a World Championship and Pan American Games.”

Read more on page 14
Hello and welcome to the September issue of The Inside Pitch, the official newsletter of USA Softball.

What a season it has been! Our Championship season comes to a close at the end of September and beginning of October with the Men’s Super, Class A, Class D and Women’s Open Slow Pitch National Championships. To all that have been involved with USA Softball over the course of the year in doing outstanding work behind the scenes, I commend you on a job well done! USA Softball is nothing without those that continue to inspire a love for the game and continue to grow this great sport of ours.

Highlighting the month of September was our Men’s National Team, who traveled to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic to compete at the Pan American Championship. After finishing 5-2 in pool play, they claimed a huge 6-5 win over Canada to guarantee themselves a spot on the medal stand but back-to-back losses to world-ranked No. 3 Argentina and No. 7 Venezuela secured the Bronze Medal. Despite flight delays in Miami due to the effects of Hurricane Irma and the subsequent weather because of Hurricane Maria, the team gave it their best and finished claiming the first international medal for the U.S. men since 2003. It is exciting to see the achievements of both our Men’s National Team program and Women’s National Team program, who earned a Gold Medal last month at the same event.

As we prepare for the Annual Council Meeting set to take place the end of October, I am excited to see you all again as we discuss and get ready for the 2018 season and beyond. The 2018 Code/Procedural Manual and Rules Change Proposals have been reviewed and are being prepared for distribution for you. Please review these documents when received as prior preparation helps conduct more effective meetings when the time comes to meet. The Board of Directors held their Fall Meeting during September at which several important decisions were made, which will be discussed at the Council Meeting. One important decision coming out of the Board of Directors Meeting was the elimination of the Hall of Fame Qualifiers, which are held each year in Oklahoma City. This came as a result of the recent bond issue which was passed by Oklahoma City that will provide funds necessary for the final stages of renovations at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium. This will result in a shortened calendar of events each summer for the Complex, and as such these berths will be redistributed for the 2018 season and beyond. Please review the minutes and discuss any items you have questions about with your Regional Vice Presidents, who are your immediate representatives on the Board of Directors.

This month’s Inside Pitch will be my last in the role of President of USA Softball. The past two years as President of USA Softball have been incredible and filled with so many memories and accomplishments that I will carry with me for a lifetime. I want to thank the USA Softball Council for allowing me the great privilege of serving in this role both here in the United States...CONTINUED ON PAGE 3
...and internationally. USA Softball has been through several milestones during my tenure, including an important rebrand, the realignment of the USA Softball Regions from 15 to 10, the reinstatement of softball into the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and better communication and leadership within our Local Associations. I encourage you all to continue to learn and find new ways to support our membership, for we can only improve if we bring new ideas to the table and provide the best-of-the best softball to our athletes, coaches and umpires.

Thank you for everything you do for our sport and for USA Softball.

USA Softball President

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If your local association has news to share and would like to be featured in next month’s newsletter, email Katie at kwillis@usasoftball.com by the 15th of the month.
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This past summer was my fifth with the USA Softball program and fourth with the United States Women’s National Team. Never in my life did I imagine wearing this jersey for as long as I have, but this year was truly the most special of them all.

For the first time in a long time, and the first time in my tenure with the program, the feel of the Olympics was back in play. The goal of winning a gold medal in 2020 was never far from mine or my teammates’ minds. Instead of focusing directly on the games in front of us in this summer, in the back of our minds we knew that we were simply preparing and trying to better ourselves for 2020. To say this was special is an understatement. I can’t tell you how many times in previous years I have been asked at airports “So you’re on the real Team USA? The team that competes in the Olympics?” and I have to explain how we are the “real” Team USA, but softball was not an Olympic sport at that time. Now, however, I proudly get to say that this team will be the one that competes in the 2020 games, and I cannot express to you how proud that makes me to wear those three letters across my chest.

With that being said, this summer was not all sunshine and rainbows, but I can tell you I have never seen more growth and trust on a team than I saw this summer. Losing our first game of bracket play in the Dominican Republic to Mexico, we were one loss away from not qualifying for 2018 World Championships. If we did not qualify for World Championships, we could not possibly make it to the Olympics in 2020. In most cases, teams would panic. But what makes the mark of a true champion is the way he/she performs when his/her back is against the wall. Let me just tell you, I have a team full of true champions. In case you didn’t know, we ended up closing out the Pan Am Qualifier in the Dominican in dominant fashion, run ruling both Canada and Mexico in a doubleheader to clinch the gold medal.

To come all the way back to win the gold medal in that way was something that had never been done before. That means that this team was special in a way that no other team has ever been. How? We simply had no egos. We were selfless. We put each other’s interests before our own and we trusted each other. That is the “secret” that won us gold. To know that, even if you were having a bad day, that your teammates truly had your back no matter what, that’s special. It allows you to play with a sense of freedom that creates an amazing environment for the team’s success.

I have never been more close with my teammates than I was this summer. We aren’t just teammates. We are sisters. I cannot say enough about how much better they made me as a person and as a player. Being around them made every single day so much fun. Experiencing Japan, the Dominican, the World Cup in Oklahoma City, anyone might get sick of seeing each other or get homesick, but we didn’t. We love each other and that makes the years 2018-2020 seem even more exciting.

This was the best summer of my life, but I truly believe the best is yet to come for Team USA.
RECAP MEN’S PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP
SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

L-R: Derrick Kennedy (San Antonio, Texas); Tony Mancha (Las Cruces, N.M.); Jonathan Lynch (Cape Girardeau, Mo.)

L-R: Jeff Nowaczyk (Midland, Mich.); Kevin Castillo (Long Beach, Calif.); Erick Ochoa (Imperial, Calif.)
The USA Softball Men’s National Team (MNT) traveled to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic for the Pan American Championship held Sept. 12-25 at the Centro Olímpico Juan Pablo Duarte. After finishing 5-2 in pool play, the MNT went on to claim a 6-5 win over world-ranked No. 4 Canada before dropping back-to-back games to Argentina and Venezuela. With their performance, the Red, White and Blue took home the Bronze Medal, the first for the U.S. MNT program since 2003.

“I am tremendously proud of this team and what we accomplished here at the Pan American Championship,” said Head Coach Gregg Leather. “The team went through a lot given the two hurricanes that unfortunately affected the area and the subsequent delays and rainouts that followed. The team never looked for an excuse and tried their best to keep all distractions off the field. We came into this tournament with some goals; to get double life in our pool, win a medal, and be on top of the podium receiving a medal. We came up short on the last goal but are very happy with the Bronze Medal we did earn.”

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My second year on Team USA was, by far, a summer I will never forget. Not only did we dominate, win Gold, and travel the world together, but we also grew as people and athletes, we bonded as sisters, and became the closest of friends.

We started in Irvine, California where we quickly got back into the swing of things. We had a couple of scrimmages that prepared us for our three-game series vs. Japan in their home country. We played in two different cities, both with large crowds that were excited to watch good softball…and good softball is what we gave them. I would have to say that visiting the Sendai local Junior High School, as a team, was my favorite memory of the trip and arguably of the summer. We each spent a couple of hours bonding with all the kids, ate lunch with them, and enjoyed each others company getting to know one another. It was an experience I won’t forget. Seeing the excitement on each of their faces, I know they were so happy to meet us and the feeling was mutual!

After our trip to Japan, we went home for a couple days before we headed to Oklahoma City to train and play in the World Cup. A couple of the SoCal girls, including myself, Janie Takeda, Paige Halstead, and Danielle O’Toole went to Radio Disney Studios in Burbank, Calif. It was so cool! We got to chat on air about the team and the upcoming events we had during the summer. It was an awesome opportunity for us to show our personalities and talk a little about what USA Softball was all about! Shout out to Stacey for putting that together, thank you!

As we headed to Oklahoma City, winning the Gold medal was what we strived for. This year, (and every year until 2020), we are very fortunate that ESPN televised the World Cup of Softball. It was such a great opportunity for the world to see international softball, in my opinion, the best softball in the world. This tournament was no walk in the park by any means! We went into the championship game undefeated, but we had battles and comebacks in order to get there. We faced Japan in the Championship Game, and every time we play each other, no matter the circumstance, it will be worth your while. Now, if you were watching on ESPN and I’ll assume you all were, you know how the tournament ended and I will leave it at that!

Being on the USA team has brought me to so many great cities and communities and allowed us to reach out to young players and share with them our knowledge for the game. We were fortunate this summer to visit Sacramento, California, Auburn and Tuscaloosa to host camps and play in exhibition games for the state. All three cities had fantastic turnouts and it really gets us so excited to see such a lively crowd filled with fans and aspiring young girls to one day fill our shoes. For myself, and I know some of my teammates, the exhibition trips are so much fun and a favorite because it allows us to bond with the community and have a definite impact on and off the field. We are very excited for future exhibition trips and cannot wait to go to your community!

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 11
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Our trip to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic to qualify for the Pan American Games and World Championship was the most fun, challenging, and rewarding trip that I have ever been a part of in my entire softball career. When I said in the beginning that we grew as people and athletes and became the closest of friends, it was because of this trip to the Dominican. We had our backs against the wall and we only had one option if we wanted a successful future for this program and the way this team responded was incredible. We lost early in the tournament to heartbreak, comeback, extra-inning ball game against Mexico. We HAD to win our next game, and the thing is we didn’t press and we didn’t make the game bigger than it was. We just played our very best softball and we came out with a HUGE ‘W’ at the end of the day. Now, our road in this tournament was far from over, we knew we had to come from the losers bracket to win Gold. And that’s exactly what we did. Our fight and our grit were indescribable. We got to Sunday, Championship Day, and we played Canada first and were losing 3-0 in the first inning. We didn’t stress and we would go on to beat them 11-3 in five innings. Up next was the Championship Game against Mexico. Kelly Barnhill threw a complete game no-hitter and we won 9-0 in five innings to take home Gold! It was incredible!

On a personal note, my parents surprised me in the DR. They face-timed me while they were getting on the plane in LA and I was so excited. I am very fortunate to have a supportive family and my parents love to travel around the world to watch Team USA play. Having them surprise me in the DR was the icing on top of the cake to this well spent trip in the Dominican.

The end of this tournament is where we clicked as one unit. Under great adversity and fighting the fight together is where we found each of us really trusting each other. We believed in each other...we felt it. From the energy in the dugout, to the positive conversations with each other, to the crazy superstitions we had. We knew whoever was in the circle, whoever was up to bat, whoever was playing at any position, they were going to get the job done. If they were a human being for that moment and made a mistake, this team knew that the next girl was going to step up and have their back. That feeling was awesome. Not only did this team get to this trusting and safe place on the field, but also I truly believe it was because we were becoming the closest of friends. We wanted to see each other succeed and we enjoyed each other’s company. This started when we had a game night in one of my teammates rooms. It wasn’t mandatory, all fun and games to keep the trip fun and light. Well, during this game night, we learned a game known as Mafia. Oh man, what this game has done to this team! Let’s just say, by the end of the Dominican trip and by the end of the summer THE ENTIRE TEAM and some staff were playing this Mafia game. Get some athletes all in a room together and play a mystery game like Mafia and it is bound to be intense!!!! We played this game non-stop. Any chance we got, at the dinner table, the hallway, especially on bus rides, and we even joked about playing it on the plane. As crazy as it sounds, this Mafia game brought out the best in us. It bonded us as a team.
A LOOK BACK AT THE WOMEN’S PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP
SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

To read more, visit USASoftball.com

L-R: Valerie Arioto (Pleasanton, Calif.); Delaney Spaulding (Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.); Aubree Munro (Brea, Calif.)

L-R: Ally Carda (Elk Grove, Calif.); Amanda Chidester (Allen Park, Mich.); Kelly Barnhill (Marietta, Ga.)
What we did in the Dominican was special. To have the heart and the willingness to do what we did, it did not just happen because we are all great athletes. It happened because we trusted each other and we believed in each other. It was powerful to be a part of and this summer will forever be instilled in my heart because this team is special and I was so honored to be with these women and this incredible staff for the summer. It was truly a dream summer!

Finally, I want to end my blog with a special story from our final night in the DR. Janie Takeda and Michelle Moultrie baptized Ali Aguilar and Haylie McCleney and the entire team showed support for our fellow sisters in Christ and shared their testimony. It was a scene I wish everyone could have witnessed. We may all come from different backgrounds, different values, different ways of life, but we knew how important this meant to Ali and Haylie. This was the decisive moment, for me, that we were a family. Truly something special, this team is. I have so much love for them all.
“You think you can do better? Why don’t you prove it?”

What started out as a simple challenge given to Dora Martinez (San Antonio, Texas) would ultimately lead to an international umpire resume that now includes a World Championship and Pan American Games. While her officiating career started out in volleyball, Dora would transition to softball after that challenge from a fellow referee. “He knew I coached softball and was very tough on umpires.” After receiving an invite to attend a softball umpire meeting, Dora accepted his challenge…and from there, her journey to becoming an international umpire began.

Once hooked, Dora relied on the support of her Local Association, USA Softball of San Antonio, to grow and develop her knowledge of the game. “My local association was my foundation,” said Martinez. Constantly encouraging her to be the best while challenging her on mechanics and rules, the San Antonio staff provided her with opportunities to further her skills by training and attending USA Softball umpire clinics. An important and vital step in furthering any umpire’s career, Martinez quickly learned that these Regional clinics, National Umpire Schools and Umpire-in-Chief (UIC) meetings, were a few ways to be seen by some of the top softball umpires in the game.

It was through her Local Association that Martinez was introduced to former USA Softball of San Antonio UIC Walt Sparks, an individual who she credits with helping her get to where she is today.

“Walt taught me how important off-field behavior was and he also introduced me to some very special people at every clinic that I still call family today,” said Martinez.

In addition to her umpiring career, that mentorship and her training would lead to various administrative roles within USA Softball as an Assistant UIC, a clinician and an evaluator.

Years after taking that first step to becoming an umpire, Martinez began to look to the international stage and becoming certified to umpire through the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC).

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 15
“I wanted to get to the highest level of umpiring and experience traveling outside the country,” Martinez said. The first step: becoming an Elite Umpire. Already a member of the National Indicator Fraternity since 2002, Martinez would achieve the requirements to receive her Elite Umpire status two years later. After applying to attend a WBSC-certification school and being accepted, Martinez successfully passed the WBSC-certification school and became eligible to umpire World Championships, Pan American Games and other various WBSC-sanctioned events.

Her first international opportunity would come in 2010 when she was assigned to the 19-Under Pan American Championship in Bogota, Columbia. Two years later, she would get her first World Championship assignment in Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada. In 2015 she would switch to an administrative role, serving as a Deputy UIC at the Toronto Pan American Games. Not only did these assignments provide an opportunity to call and serve as an administrator at the highest level possible, it also created lasting relationships with her peers from across the globe.

“Every experience has been unique whether I was umpiring or serving as an assistant to the UIC,” said Martinez. “I love learning from the different cultures and sharing my knowledge of softball. Most importantly, I enjoy expanding my umpire family all over the world and learning how diverse we are, yet we all have one common goal in becoming better umpires.

Most recently, Martinez was assigned as the Deputy UIC for the Women’s Pan American Championship in the Dominican Republic. In her role, she worked with the UIC and her fellow Deputy UIC in assigning umpires to games, evaluating them during the competition, retrieving lineups from coaches before the start of each contest and giving constant feedback to umpires.

“My main goal was to create an atmosphere that allowed the diversity of each culture to work together for one common goal: to umpire the championship at the highest level and create a great atmosphere for the athletes,” said Martinez.

International umpiring provides individuals the opportunity to experience different cultures, which Martinez embraces. “I am a constant learner so it is very exciting for me to embrace different cultures and I believe it is very important to respect everyone. I like learning from the different cultures and how they see things and how I need to adjust on how I communicate to respect their culture,” Martinez noted. With different cultures, however, comes language barriers which creates unique situations in which one must adapt to speak the language of softball.

“I am very fortunate to be bilingual,” Martinez said of overcoming language barriers in the Dominican Republic. “Even though I did speak Spanish, I used verbal and non-verbal communication to share ideas by using dry erase and magnetic boards. It comes easy for me because I am a visual learner so I like breaking things down and using props if necessary.”

Though she’s continuing to rise on the international scene, the journey hasn’t always been easy for Martinez. Commitments to family, work and umpiring continues to be a challenge that faces many in the umpire community.

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 16
Fortunately, with the backing of a very supportive family, Martinez has been able to keep up with her passion for the game…but it’s still a work in progress. “I am a teacher in public education so having to juggle my time off becomes a challenge when the students and administrators rely on me to fulfill my responsibilities,” said Martinez. “Teaching students is also a passion of mine so it makes it difficult to turn down assignments or positions I would like to have, but I’ve learned how to manage my time to make it the best for all.”

So what advice does she have for her fellow umpires who wish to follow in her footsteps? For Martinez, it all starts with that first step of getting involved at your local level.

“Everything is a process and it takes time,” she said. “We only get one try to make a first impression, so get involved in your local and state association.”

Finding a mentor that you can learn from also helps, she notes.

“My mentor was the late Julie Johnson. I always took the time to pick her brain and ask as many questions and situations as I could.”

Of course, understanding and learning the basics cannot be overlooked.

“Read and learn your rules and mechanics and always honor USA Softball! Once you lay the foundation, just understand that it will take time to get to where you want to be, so don’t rush or get frustrated.”

Through it all, Martinez has no regrets.

“Every step is very worthwhile.”
Nine individuals will be inducted into the National Softball Hall of Fame on Oct. 21, 2018. Pictured to the left: Bob Quinn (Fast Pitch Player), Dick Gulmon (Meritorious Service), Evans Telegadas (Fast Pitch Player), Gary Evans (Umpire), Jimmy Derrick (Umpire), Mark Martin (Slow Pitch Player), Mike Candrea (Meritorious Service), Rick Minton (Fast Pitch Player), and Willie Simpson (Slow Pitch Player).
The WWAST had a busy September! On Sept. 2-4, the team travelled to Appleton, Wisc. While there, the team played a doubleheader at Neuroscience Group Field at the Fox Cities Stadium, the home of the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers Minor League Baseball Team. The first opponent was a local team with the second game against local celebrities. The team then played in back-to-back tournaments over the next two weeks. On Sept. 8-10, the WWAST headed to Columbus, Ohio for an exhibition game against Ohio State Athletic Alumni. This was followed by a tournament on Saturday and Sunday. While there, the team attended the Ohio State football game tailgate and some of the players attended the Ohio State/Oklahoma football game with over 100,000 other fans that packed the Horseshoe! Then, on September 15-17, the team went to Treasure Island Casino in Welch, Minn. The weekend started off with a few WWAST players attending a Minnesota Twins game where the WWAST was honored on the jumbotron and WWAST player, Josh Wege, threw out the first pitch. The team then played two exhibition games on Friday night and the tournament on Saturday and Sunday. The WWAST would like to thank everyone - the event organizers, sponsors, and fans who made these events such a great success.
Coaches will have the opportunity to learn from some of the best in the game as USA Softball has announced the locations for the 2017-18 USA Softball National Coaching Schools. Held in two locations, the schools feature instruction from current and former USA Softball Women’s National Team (WNT) coaches and athletes and will take place during the months of November and January.

Click here for more information on the National Coaching Schools

The first USA Softball National Coaching School will be held November 17-19 in Salinas, Calif. and is hosted by USA Softball of Northern California. Open to 250 participants the cost of registration is $200 per coach while the first 150 coaches will receive a commemorative gift. Held at the Salinas Storm House (185 Maryal Drive), lunch will be provided on Saturday while continental breakfast will be served Saturday-Sunday. Leading the Salinas National Coaching School is Women’s National Team (WNT) Head Coach Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla./University of South Florida Head Coach), two-time Olympic Head Coach Mike Candrea (Tucson Ariz./University of Arizona Head Coach) and 2017 WNT Assistant Coach Heather Tarr (Redmond, Wash./University of Washington Head Coach). Eriksen has been at the helm of the USA Softball WNT since 2011 and has led the program to a Pan American Games Gold, four World Cup of Softball titles and recently claimed Gold at the 2016 World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) World Championship. Two-time Olympic Head Coach Candrea led the program to a Gold Medal at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and a Silver Medal at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing as well as numerous other medals in international competition before retiring from his USA Softball coaching duties in 2008. Tarr recently served her first season with the WNT program as an Assistant Coach where she helped guide the Red, White and Blue to a Gold Medal finish at the Pan American Championship and runner-up finish at the Japan Cup. Click here for more information on the Salinas Coaching School.

Hosting a USA Softball National Coaching School for the second year is USA Softball of Dallas/Ft. Worth. Scheduled for January 19-21, 2018 in Plano, Texas, the school is open to 250 participants with a cost of registration of $250 while USA Softball-registered coaches pay $200. Held at the Hilton Granite Park (5805 Granite Park), coaches who register by December 15 will be entered into a drawing to receive free tuition for the school. Eriksen will be joined by current USA Softball WNT members Jessica Moore (Sutter, Calif./University of South Florida Assistant Coach) and Janie Takeda (Placentia, Calif./University of Oklahoma Volunteer Assistant Coach). Click here for more information on the Plano Coaching School.

Following the opening of each school, Eriksen and instructors will cover a variety of topics that relate to coaching fast pitch softball teams. Topics include: pitching strategies, hitting, base running, pitching, embracing the process, slapping and bunting, defense, outfield play, hitting drills, how to plan a practice, leadership and what it takes to play USA Softball.
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Fans can show their support for the Red, White and Blue all year long. Non-custom replica jerseys are available at ShirtsAndLogos.com or USASoftballStore.com for $39, while custom replica jerseys of WNT athletes will be available solely through ShirtsAndLogos.com for $59. Replica jerseys are available for all WNT athletes who have exhausted their NCAA-eligibility, including 16 members of the 2017 USA Softball WNT squad that recently won the Pan American Championship in the Dominican Republic.

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USA SOFTBALL MOURNS THE LOSS OF USA SOFTBALL COMMISSIONER JIM VOYLES

Jim Voyles: January 20, 1959 - September 29, 2017 | Obituary below is taken from online. Click here to read more.

On September 29, 2017, James L. (Jim) Voyles, age 58, an affable music afficionado and sports enthusiast who was born at Perry County Hospital and raised in Cloverport, Kentucky, by his parents, Scott Morrison Voyles and Betty (Derrick) Voyles, passed away peacefully after a long struggle and courageous battle with cancer. Jim lived in Owensboro, Kentucky, and left this world to be with the three-men he admired most, the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost.

Jim was active in sports during all of his years in school. In elementary school, he was a proud member of the Cloverport All Stars Baseball team. He also played sports in high school, and during those years, Jim began a tour as a professional wrestler in the early years of that sport, and participated in wrestling events in many cities in Kentucky.

After attending college, Jim became an ordained Baptist minister. Jim became an accomplished preacher who helped reach people in many small communities without a regular and resident minister. He frequently blended old and new movie quotes and song lyrics with biblical passages to drive home points that resonated with his audience. Ultimately, Jim became associated with Macedonia Baptist Church, where he further honed his preaching skills and instilled enthusiasm and commitment from those who heard him speak.

While employed in the circulation department at the Evansville Courier, Jim’s enjoyment of sports led him to become a basketball referee, and he regularly officiated on Friday nights at area high schools. Jim always promoted good sportsmanship at all those events, and was not reluctant to toss out coaches who failed to be good sports or tried to prevail by bullying.

Jim began employment with the City of Owensboro, first as manager of Hillcrest Golf Course, then later as Recreation Superintendent. Jim’s passion for amateur and college sports caused him to initiate competitive sports recruiting and organizing and hosting sports tournaments and championship play for the City of Owensboro. He traveled to sports recruitment conventions and helped secure tournaments that brought many people from other states to Kentucky to compete in championships that brought great amateur sports to the Owensboro community. His significant contribution to those community efforts established the foundation for sports tourism that continues to this day. He was a driving force in helping Owensboro to receive recognition as an All-American Sports City.

After leaving employment with the City of Owensboro, Jim formed his own sport recruiting and sport-wear companies and continued to recruit amateur sports tournaments for Owensboro, and later for other cities, including Bowling Green, Kentucky. He was most proud of his appointment as a Commissioner for American Softball Association, and for the successes as an entrepreneur and the growth of his businesses.

Jim enjoyed spending time with his friends, learning about many topics, and expertly debating on them. His keen intellect and piercing sense of humor educated and entertained those who spent time with him. Jim’s gift to those who knew him was his ability to make them laugh, and simply enjoy life while in his company.
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Written by USA Softball Marketing Coordinator, Nick Dorety

Earlier this month, we set up a booth at the Boys & Girl’s Clubs of Oklahoma County annual ‘Day For Kids.’ This event was held in their gymnasium and was organized like a festival. Students from Oklahoma City University’s Presidential Leadership Program played music and coordinated all the activities. Every half hour, the kids participated in a ‘cake walk’ and were able to win cupcakes if they sat in certain chairs when the song ended. A dance studio came in and coordinated a half hour of group lessons. The kids had a blast dancing to Bruno Mars with the studio professionals! There was also a flag football game planned for the kids with the Oklahoma Lady Force, a local women’s football team. Other groups in attendance include the Boy Scouts and Energy FC Soccer Club. Oklahoma City University students set up a bounce house for kids to jump inside, a ‘Guitar Hero’ station, face painting station and an art project that would be shown in the Boys and Girls Club building.

Kids that came to the USA Softball booth were challenged by a bag toss game. They had to throw strikes with bean bags and were able to receive fun USA Softball prizes! Kids received actual softballs leftover from the NCAA DII National Championship and USA Softball chapstick, while parents received USA Softball pens and business card phone holders.

I’d encourage your association to reach out to the Boys and Girls Club. There are always options for how you can partner with them. Make sure that you highlight your community involvement on your association’s social media and website. You could even be featured in the next Inside Pitch! Softball season may be winding down on the field, however this is a perfect time to get involved in your community events. Next month we plan to have a booth at the Oklahoma City ‘Open Streets’ event, which will be held just south of downtown. Almost ten thousand came out to the spring Open Streets event on a rainy day! This is a 100% free event to be a part of, with the focus being on getting families active in a fun, family-friendly street festival. We are also looking into being a part of a huge Halloween festival in Norman, Okla. this next month after our USA Softball Annual Meeting in Greensboro. This is another free event to be a part of and can get kids to register to play next spring. Events like these are so much fun for these kids, but also for your staff and volunteers.

If you ever need any help planning community events for your association, please feel free to call my direct line at 405-425-3422 and we can brainstorm. The USA Softball Marketing Department is here to help you be successful!
INFORMATION ON THE 2017 USA SOFTBALL ANNUAL MEETING TRADESHOW:

This year’s USA Softball Trade Show is on Wednesday, October 25 from 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., and will be held in Greensboro, N.C. in the ‘Guilford Ballrooms D, E, F & G’ at the Sheraton Greensboro at Four Seasons. Exhibitor registration is now open.

Attendees at the Trade Show include USA Softball Council Members, local USA Softball association staff, Park and Rec professionals, guests and other meeting attendees. This is your chance to be in front of hundreds of decision makers from throughout the U. S.

*Please note that your trade show registration also covers your annual meeting registration.

Only 74 booth spaces are available for the Trade Show. You will select your booth during the online registration process. Master Card, Visa and Discover credit cards are acceptable for payment. The cost per booth for a non-profit organization is $500; the booth cost for commercial is $650. Receipts will be sent to you for your booth payment. Each booth space measures 10 feet by 10 feet, and includes - 8’ high back wall drape, 3’ high side rail drape, (1) 6’ skirted tables, (2) chairs, (1) wastebasket and (1) Identification sign.

Click here to sign up and secure your space at this year’s USA Softball Trade Show >>

If you are interested in learning more about the annual meeting and the tradeshow, call Nick Dorety at 405-425-3422 or email ndorety@usasoftball.com.

We’ll see you in Greensboro soon!

Watch a video highlighting the 2016 USA Softball Annual Meeting Tradeshow >>
WATCH AND CONNECT ONLINE!
#USASOFTBALL #PLAYBALL #TEAMUSA

WATCH SOFTBALL ALL YEAR LONG!
VISIT THE USA SOFTBALL VIDEO LIBRARY!

FOLLOW ALONG ON SOCIAL TO SEE THE LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES + SHARE PHOTOS AND CONNECT WITH OTHERS AROUND THE COUNTRY!
Vinyl Banners

Item #C1286 - 8’x3’ USA Softball Primary & USA Softball Secondary Stacked, blue background: $65
Item #C1286 - 8’x3’ USA Softball Primary & USA Softball Secondary Stacked, white background: $65
Item #C1288 - 6’x3’ USA Softball Primary & USA Softball Secondary Stacked, white background: $55

Feather Flags

CONTACT NICK DORETY AT NDORETY@USASOFTBALL.COM >>