**-Hank Margeson Responses**

**Q #1**

**Over the last couple of years, NBUA has taken on games for age groups below the age of 13.  Do you feel this is appropriate and if so why and if not appropriate?  Why not?**

The NBUA has always provided service for CYO baseball as far back as I have been a member.  Those games included play below the age of 13.  More recently we were approached by a customer asking us to expand our coverage for younger aged teams.  We initially pushed back in 2017 and recommended that the customer seek coverage for the games elsewhere.  They came back to us again this year due to the high level of skill and professionalism the NBUA brings to all games we umpire.  I believe that since NBUA will be in a position to umpire their games as the participants advance in age, we can positively influence the players and teams earlier by working their games.  I also believe that working younger games will enable us to open our membership to younger umpires, which will bring down our average age of 54!

**Q #2**

**I’m proud to be associated with the NBUA. I think the Board has done a fantastic job and improved many things.**

**Tell the membership why you’re proud of our organization and how will you help recruit new members because we need new men and women to join NBUA?**

First and foremost, each of us demonstrate how great NBUA is every time we set foot on a baseball field.  How we comport ourselves speaks volumes regarding our attitude and willingness to be accommodating.  Creating a positive image of the NBUA is one way of drawing interest in our association.  I’m proud to uphold that image each and every game.  I am also planning to work with our customers, especially the younger teams to designate one representative per team to attend training and umpire games in order to guarantee we are able to provide crews for their games.  This is a similar approach to how youth soccer has created a deep reserve pool of officials over the years.  I’m also interested in pursuing the NASO program “Battlefields to Ballfields” which is targeting returning veterans who are attending local colleges.  This is a focused college recruiting program that we can tap into in order to attract high quality individuals into our association.

**Q #3**

**So as in our evaluation process, one good thing and one thing to work on.  I would like for each candidate to give one good thing they want to bring to the NBUA (very specific) and one thing they feel the Board needs to work on to make it better.**

The challenge I see with the Evaluation program is that members tend to focus on scores rather than constructive feedback.  If we want to achieve our goals as an association, improving our performance game-in and game-out will take us a long way in that effort.  I am also an advocate that our members deserve to be considered for promotion regardless of their tier level.  Therefore, it is just as important to evaluate a rising member of the C-tier who is being considered for higher level assignments and promotion as it is an A-tier member seeking to join the next tier.  Every single member of this association is important and needs an honest and fair on-field performance assessment.

**Q #4**

**I’ve read all your statements. Please be more clear to what you see is wrong with NBUA, what is RIGHT with NBUA. What do you propose to help make all of us “AN EVEN BETTER ORGANIZATION??? “**

This process we are undergoing is what is right with the association.  As Board members we are accountable to those we represent and if we don’t deliver on our promises, we should be replaced.  What I see wrong with the NBUA is a reluctance to change.  When I first got involved with the NBUA Board I sought to continue our transformation into a more customer oriented association.  I see that as how we will be an even better association in the future.  Unfortunately, we have some history to overcome, not all from our own doing given the lore of rhubarbs on close calls.  I am most encouraged that we’ve adapted our training, focused on improving our game management and are attracting new members who see our role differently than the past.

**Q #5**

**What would you like to accomplish as a Board member?   Be very specific.**

I want the NBUA to be the standard bearer for youth sports officiating in the state of Washington.  That has been and will continue to be my goal for this association.  I am also seeking to negotiate a contract extension with a major customer to include a significant adjustment in our game fees.  The adjustment may need to be phased in over the life of the contract, but it will my sole focus to ensure that we’re getting a fee commensurate with the level of play.

**Q #6**

**Umpires come and go every year & retention seems to be an issue! I don’t think I’m wrong. No lack of games! How do you propose we market ourselves better to recruit new guys! I’m not getting any younger! How do we keep our guys?**

Each year we have about the same number of members who depart, often for disparate reasons.  Some move out of the area, other’s jobs or family take a greater priority, and a few decide to hang up their equipment for good.  That’s to be expected and in my opinion, being an umpire is a calling, once that calling wanes it is time to step away.  I’ve covered the recruiting piece in an earlier question, but would add that if 25 percent of us recruited a new member for the 2019 season, and another 25 percent followed suit in 2020, in four years we’d nearly double our membership!  I’ll finish by saying that each of us are ambassadors for NBUA every single time we put on the NBUA cap and walk onto the field.  The attitude we carry onto the field is the best recruiting tool.  If we demonstrate our love for the game and enjoyment in what we’re doing, believe me, it will be noticed and others are going to want to be a part of us.

**Q #7**

**If you were elected to this Board & you were voted  to become a Committee Chairman, which one best suits your strengths?**

**Pick one & briefly explain why.**

* **Evaluation Chairman**
* **Training Chairman**
* **Recruiting & Retention Chairman**

If I had to choose one, it would be Training Director.  I see this as so critical to the success of this association as we strive to achieve our goals of putting the best product on the field.  In order to be successful, the Training Director will need to be organized, collaborative, hit the ground running (we need to start planning now), incorporate what has worked well in past training sessions, listen and incorporate the feedback shared from the membership in the current survey, create a committee of experts with a variety of backgrounds and skills, communicate early and often with our members, and be open to constructive feedback throughout training and during the 2019 season.  My goal would be to create a 2+ year training plan, picking up where Bill Coyne left off, and adding in-season and post-season training opportunities.