

Members of NVSUA,

I actually started to formulate this message in my head a few weeks ago while sitting on my couch thinking "tonight we should be at our awards banquet" I did want to take a few minutes and summarize the year that nearly wasn't, announce our award winners and pass on some key information going into next year.

**Year in Review:** overall without the high school season, NVSUA worked 202 recreation league games once all were allowed to return to the field, by comparison in 2019 the association worked 206 games. I'd say despite the best efforts of the COVID virus, softball still thrived in 2020.

**Awards:** it is with great pleasure we announce the following VHSL years or service awards, USA Softball Medals program, National Indicator Fraternity and NVSUA annual awards. All will be formally presented at our next meeting, hopefully in early 2021.

**VHSL Years of Service:**

5 years: Michael Beaupre, Eddie Mallard,  
10 years: Mason Bishop, Mark Dinneen, Ty Washington  
15 years: Mike Kashtock  
20 years: Fred Seeger  
30 years: Kathy Gutmann

**USA Softball Medals:**

**Blue:** Jack Deschauer, Tom Donnelly, Shawn Harris, Michelle Hiltz, Jodi James, Patrick Ware, Zandy Williams

**Bronze:** Rich Guarassi, Craig Stowers

**National Indicator Fraternity:** JP DeFranco, Rich Guarassi, Craig Stowers and Don Wu...a real significant accomplishment within USA Softball umpire program.

**NVSUA Awards:**

**Iron Mask:** Mary Matusiewicz (most games worked, 40 -- by comparison in recent years this award winner was in the 45 games range so Mary was on par with past years even with COVID)

**Ben Thompson Memorial Commissioners Award:** Kerry Fraser

**Rookie of the Year:** Mary Matusiewicz

**President's Award:** Angie Watts

Congratulations to all!

**National Umpire School:** all should have received the attached information on a National Umpire School being held over near Ocean City, MD in February. This is a VERY worthwhile 2 days session with instructors from the national umpire staff on a 25:1 student ratio. Although the pre-registration has past, I have been told by the organizer the late fee will be waived until January 1st, 2021. The instructors are:

Steve Nelson, Deputy Director of Umpires from Alabama  
Jimmy Derrick, Region 3 Umpire in Chief from Georgia  
Dave Chandler, Deputy Director of Umpires from Indiana  
Jim Ballangee, Region 2 Umpire in Chief from Virginia

For those that have been around a while, some new names on this staff which may entice you that much more to learn for someone you haven't heard from in the past. Registration is low at this point, most likely due to COVID, I have been assured they will reexamine the feasibility of hosting this again in January and adjust accordingly. If you have interest, please take action to register in the next couple weeks. It will probably be several years before this type of event is held in the local area again, last time was in 2015. Don't miss out! When you register you may receive an email stating you must be registered, background checked and safe sport certified prior to attending the school....we will take care of your registration and background check prior to that, if you register with NVSUA as a primary association. The new refresher SafeSport course if currently available for your completion.

**USA Softball of VA news:** The Commissioner for USA Softball of Central VA, Henry Pollard, announced his retirement a few months ago. His replacement was named about 3 weeks ago, he is familiar to many of us that have worked the girls fast pitch program. Congratulations to John McPhail on his selection to run USA Softball of Central VA. Shortly after his announcement, John named Joe DeFranco as his Umpire in Chief....Congrats to Joe. We are told the structure for staffing fast pitch tournaments won't change in the near future as Joe and Steve will work closely to get all tournaments fully staffed.

**HS Season:** as stated previously, still scheduled to start in April. First practice can begin on April 12th and first games on April 26th. Registration is open on the VHSL Whistle site now and can be completed anytime between now and the middle of March. Dates for the clinic and test have not been announced as of yet.

**USA Tournaments:** I think there are currently nearly 30 girls fast pitch tournaments scheduled in Virginia next year. There are a few as early as March and April, we will try to work with Steve and Joe so that our association can work them to the greatest extent possible as a precursor to the start of the HS season.

On behalf of the entire board of NVSUA, we wish you and your family a very safe, healthy and happy holiday season.

Bob

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