

Good morning, fellow IAABO members. I know that you all have flights to catch so it is not my intention to speak more than 90 minutes. No, in reality, I will be brief and to the point. I just completed my 41st year of officiating and I can truly say that I am no worse than I ever was. I don't understand why I can't remember what I wore yesterday, but I can remember that I got paid \$6.50 to work my first game in Waterville, ME.

I am tremendously honored and extremely humbled to be your 72nd President. Like all those that came before me, I would not be here if it wasn't for the many people that helped and supported me along this amazing journey. First and foremost, I just want to thank my wife, Ann, for 30 years of wedded bliss next month. She has never once complained about the frequent nights out but she certainly was capable of asking me to hand over the game checks...all \$6.50. And there are my two lovely daughters, Ellie and Julie. Unfortunately, Ellie is in Massachusetts attending a wedding. Julie is here with her mother and I want to thank her for the games that she attended with me. Especially, on the night that I so graciously ripped a hole in the seat of my pants at a game.

I must thank so many of my mentors such as Al Card and Bob Whytock, high school teachers of mine. They got me interested in officiating at a very young age.

And there is Peter Webb. There isn't a person in this room that couldn't come up with a superlative to describe him. He has always been available to me to offer advice in a very non-judgmental way.

There are my colleagues in Maine, not only from Board 20, but all the boards. I have been so fortunate to be surrounded by exceptional officials and exceptional people. There are too many to mention in my 41 years but I would like to mention just a few.

Charlie McDonald and Jeff Jewett were two of the board interpreters on my board. They gave tirelessly of their time to train and educate our new and veteran officials along with TJ Halliday and Doug Burdin, who have both served as president of Board #20. Although we don't always agree on things, I have learned a tremendous amount from them. The most amazing thing about all these individuals is that they freely gave of their time and never ever cared about how many games they did or did not get because of it. I would be remiss if I didn't mention one of the most admired and respected officials from my board. His name is Al Halliday, a person who truly personifies the IAABO way of "one rule, one interpretation". Unfortunately, due to health issues, Al is unable to be with us today.

I am looking forward to working with our Executive Director, Tom Lopes and his assistant Donnie Eppley along with the exceptional group of Executive Committee members.

Past President Dan Barringer has done a very good job and he has made it easy for me to hit the ground running. I have collaborated with President-elect Tony Haley on various issues and I know that we can continue to move this organization forward in a positive manner.

There are a number of things that I would like to see us focus on in the coming year. Some involve only the Executive Committee, some involve our hard working committees and some involve our local boards. I am not sure that we can accomplish everything but perhaps we can begin to tackle some of these issues.

1. We need to continue to increase our membership, both at the local board level and by adding new boards in areas that we currently don't have members. I will be working with the Executive Committee and the Executive Director to establish a strategy as to how to do this. I strongly encourage every board to consider establishing a Junior IAABO program. After all, we can never have enough officials, especially good young ones.
2. I will be asking the Executive Committee for support to continue our efforts in Canada. We have made great strides under the leadership and direction of Dennis Herbert. We must continue those efforts with the expectation of adding more members outside the province of Ontario.
3. I have never backed down from things in which I believe strongly. For the past few years, we have vigorously debated the issues of provisional and dual membership. We must resolve this issue. I will be appointing an ad hoc committee in the very near future. They will be charged with making a recommendation to the Executive Committee on how to best deal with these issues.
4. I strongly support the efforts that were started by Past-President Jack Doyle involving Special Olympics. I encourage all boards to make a conscious effort to get involved in their state. It is the right thing to do.
5. I am asking all regional representatives to be prepared to report quarterly to the Executive Committee on activities that are taking place in their areas.
6. I have felt for a long time that we must develop a strategy to ensure that all active IAABO members have adequate and comprehensive insurance including liability, medical and game fee reimbursement. Contrary to public opinion, this is not the case for a large number of our members. I will be working with our Executive Director and our insurance representatives on this issue.