

What does an organization like Virginia Amateur Sports look like from a seat by the boardroom table? Pete Lampman is finding out.

Lampman is best known and fondly remembered as the president and director of VAS for 25 years before his retirement at the end of 2016. On Jan. 1, he officially became a member of the VAS Board of Directors.

Lampman oversaw the Games rise from a handful of competitions to a broad variety of events that had an Olympic style atmosphere. Helping him build the programs and the VAS organization was a capable and visionary board of directors that had dozens of members come and go throughout those years. He understood the vital role the board played, but he never had the perspective of a board member.

“I’ll be looking behind the scenes, seeing what they were seeing when I was working” Lampman said. “Their perspective as a board member, as opposed to being the director, is different and I’m learning that.”

Lampman has been to a board meeting already as an observer, but there was nothing there to surprise him. Since leaving the formal leadership role seven years ago, Lampman has been helping where needed. He coordinates volunteers at several of the events and even dons the stripes to referee basketball in the Commonwealth Games tournament once the days’ games get up and running.

“I’ve been plugging along with them, and I’ll continue to be a part of it,” he says. “This is such a plus-plus-plus for me. I get to continue to work with people I have worked with a long time; I get to work for an organization I love and help out; and I get to see sports from a different angle. It is such a dynamite organization with all the people who help out and all the people who take part.”

The board now has five people who returned after previous service in the time when Lampman was president.

“Virginia Foster, Dr. Elizabeth Lee, John Heil, Sam Lazarro, Dr. Bob Antozzi – they were all on the board back then and now I get to work with them as a board member. I look forward to that. I am grateful to be asked to serve on the board,” Lampman says.

One of the new directions that Lampman is particularly happy to see is the move into offering games that cater to athletes dealing with challenges. Challenger Little League baseball and Unified Rugby entered into partnerships with VAS in 2023 and Lampman hopes to see more opportunities offered to athletes with challenges of all types in the future.

“I used to work with Special Olympics so that dear to my heart,” Lampman says. “I love seeing it open up so a lot more special programs are part of the Games.”

The role of a board member has important similarities with everyone else associated with the Games, and sports in general. Organizers, volunteers, competitors, all benefit from the power of teamwork, the lessons of responsibility and the joy of true camaraderie, he says. "Plus, you make life-long friendships doing this," Lampman says. "I look forward to the organization's continuing success."