

NWSABR NEWSLETTER

post-convention, all-star issue, 2011

JULY 2011

VOL. 37 ISSUE 1

Upcoming meetings:



August 6	PK Park	Eugene, OR
August 27	Nat Bailey Stadium	Vancouver, B.C.
November 5	Seattle Pacific University	Seattle, WA

Registration deadline for the Eugene meeting is next Thursday, July 21. The meeting is from 1:00 to 5:00. The Eugene Emeralds game is at 7:05. Discounted tickets

are \$8.00 each. You can attend just the meeting, just the game, or both events.

The Vancouver meeting does not require

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survey results inside

August meetings

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registration. Washington residents will need an enhanced driver's license, a passport, or a passport card to cross the U.S./Canada border. Oregon residents will need a passport or a passport card.



A Penny for Your Thoughts

Brad Penny had his best years with the Dodgers. When they let him go as a free agent after an injury-plagued 2008 season, I figured the Dodgers were penniless.

On June 20, Bud Selig rejected a proposed television contract between the Dodgers and Fox Sports. Frank McCourt, who is possibly the owner or co-owner of the Dodgers pending a variety of possible legal outcomes, needed the instant income to meet the team's June 30 payroll. As I write this on June 21, it appears that the Dodgers will truly be penniless at the end of the month.

In an ironic twist, the Dodgers played the Tigers in an interleague game the evening of Selig's edict. Lefty Clayton Kershaw pitched a brilliant 2-hit shutout. The losing pitcher was Brad Penny.

NWSABR Survey Results

by John Henshell

Position: NWSABR President

Bats: Left, **Throws:** Left

Height: 5' 10", **Weight:** 150ish lb.

The complete survey results follow. Thank you for participating. The results were encouraging and informative. The e-mail messages went to 280 members. We had about 51 responses to the survey.

At our May meeting, I showed and recapped the survey results and presented an action plan based on what you said you want. For those of you who missed the meeting, I'm presenting the same information here.

To give the survey results some context, I created maps that show where we live (pages 4-6). We are SABR's largest geographic chapter, but a small one in terms of number of members. We are scattered from Alaska to the California border and the coast to the Rocky Mountains. Our biggest concentration of members is in the greater Seattle area, where we have more than twice as many members as in the greater Portland area. More than half of our members live in those two urban areas; almost half of the rest of our members live elsewhere along the I-5 corridor. We have surprisingly few members on the east side of Lake Washington or in the Silicon Forest. I doubt that engineers are less likely to have a thirst for baseball knowledge than the rest of us, so SABR probably needs to gain awareness among this population.

Some definite trends emerged in the survey, and we're split on a few issues. The best news is

that what we have been doing is what most respondents want.

The most important thing we wanted to learn is why people don't come to meetings. More than half say it's because of family or work conflicts, and most of the rest say it's too far to travel. Enough people are willing to host members that we should aggressively promote the idea. We can also promote and coordinate carpooling. SABRNation (hate the name, sounds like you-know-who Nation or hibernation) may help. Perhaps those strategies will help overcome the too-far-to-travel objection for some people.

The first question asked, "How many of our events have you attended in the past year?" Replies came from a good balance of involved and unininvolved members. I think that enhances the credibility of the results.

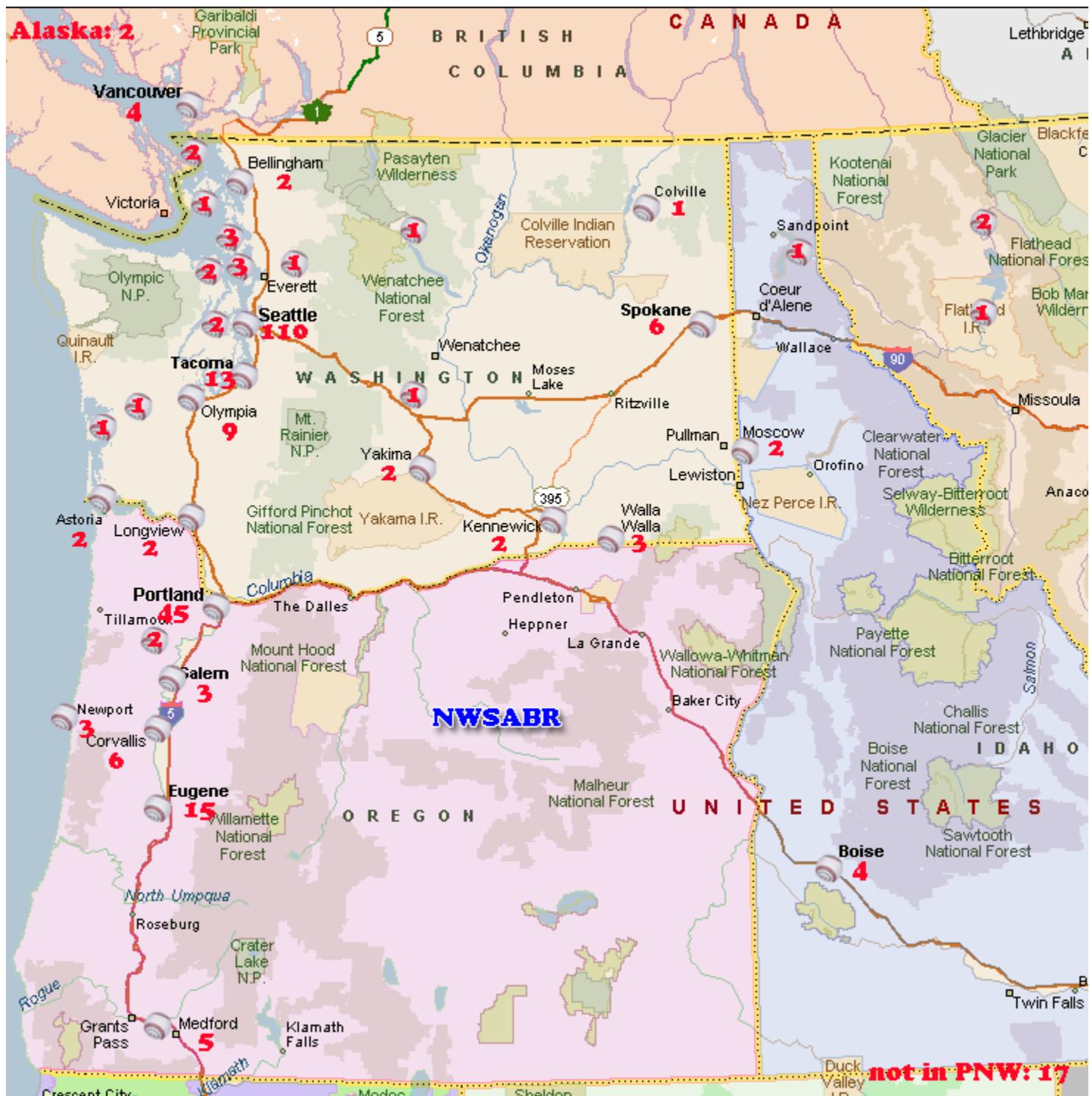
Here are the specific actions we'll take in response to the following results:

(numbers are question numbers)

2. This question asked what is the main appeal of chapter meetings is. Most people like all of what we typically do. Celebrity guests are not a particular attraction. With that knowledge, we should focus on guests who can and will provide information we don't already know. For example, a former player—no matter how great—is not going to be of high interest to this group unless he's willing to go well beyond generic post-game interview clichés.

4. A 50/50 split of members is or isn't interested in trivia quizzes, with 11 who see them as "an enticement to attend." We should continue

Some aspects of the survey
continued on page 7







NWSABR Survey Results

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offering them, but schedule a concurrent activity for when we go over the results. Your suggestions for this are welcome.

I received some very favorable responses to the last quiz, so that suggests that quizzes that seem less like school tests are a good idea. Should we try live trivia?

5. In response to "How far in advance of an event do you usually make a decision to attend?" we learned that people make immediate plans to attend. We need to set the dates early.

6. The number of people who are interested in a meeting in Salem or Eugene was on the cusp of justifying the planning effort (assuming that some of those people won't actually come). I was encouraged enough to plan our August 6 meeting in Eugene.

The new park and number of members in Eugene and our deep south favored Eugene. The Salem/Keizer stadium abuts I-5, which is a major disadvantage.

8. 9. 11. These questions were about where we meet. The results are clear. We need to avoid downtown locations with no free or dedicated parking as much as possible.

Someone wrote in that we should meet at sports bars. I suspect that one person is responsible for similar write-in responses to most of the remaining questions. This member apparently either owns a sports bar or desperately needs to get into a 12-step program.

Question 11 was specifically about meeting in a place such as a sports bar, and the idea was strongly rejected. I don't know if this has any significance, but most of the few "agree" responses came from late voters.

Members occasionally bring children to meetings, and should be able to do so. If people who are below the legal drinking age become members, we certainly want to encourage their involvement.

Although I intended the question literally, I also figuratively wondered if people preferred formal or informal meetings. I interpret the results to mean that you prefer the status quo of formal meetings followed by social get-togethers with beer and food. (See also question 22).

12. and 13. The meeting starting time question tells me that if people are going to drive 30 minutes or 3 hours or more, they want as much programming as they can get. Most meetings should be 12-5, but we can experiment a bit with later starting times. The status quo prevails in question 13 about President's Day weekend, too, but the minority vote is significant. We should try a late-March meeting and see how attendance compares. Probably the best time to try that is 2013 to give the incoming VP more planning time.

top
I am troubled by the response, "I don't go - I went once and no one talked to me." I know this isn't the only person who has felt victimized by our cliquishness. Your suggestions for solutions are welcome. I think we should ask a few extro-

Does anyone go to meetings?
continued on page 8

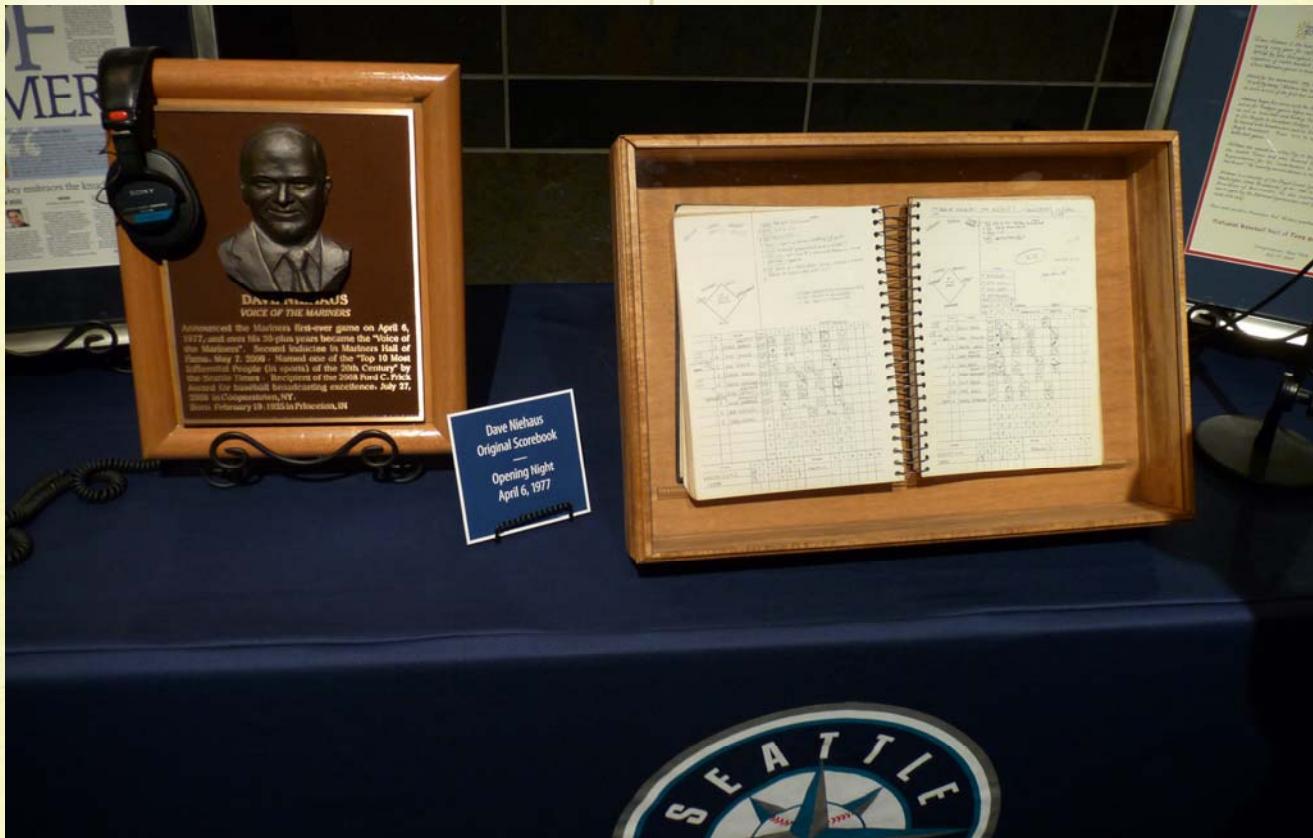
NWSABR Survey Results

continued from page 7

everted people (e.g. not me) to volunteer to serve as “designated greeters.” The DGs will arrive early and be responsible for welcoming and talking baseball with someone they don’t know. If they see someone standing around alone during a break, they have the same duty.

or Dave; 29% don’t want to make the change. With insufficient support and 15 members who care enough to vote being opposed, we can’t make the change. However, we can continue to discuss the idea and revisit it in the future.

15. This question asked about national vs. local interest. The large minority who are mostly inter-



The next batch of questions is about chapter membership.

14. Regarding renaming the chapter after Dave Niehaus, 41% want to change the name to hon-

ested in SABR on a national level is another indicator of why some people don’t attend meetings.

16. and 17. These questions ask about the chapter Web site and Yahoo group. This newsletter is

NWSABR Survey Results

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largely a response to the significant percentages of members who are unaware of these communication tools. We had planned to include instructions for using both communication tools in this issue, but they will have to wait for a future issue.

18. The time and effort we put into the meeting recaps is definitely worthwhile.



content that SABR or NWSABR already offers. I know that many of you are unhappy with the new SABR site, but I recommend that you do some exploring to find all the good resources that are there.

Response #9 and the technology suggestions are particularly good ideas that I hope become possible. I downloaded some audio files from the convention that were on the national Web site, and that was the next best thing to being there.

The final set of questions were about interconnectedness.

20. In general, members embraced the idea of more interconnectedness. That will be one of our goals.

21. I can't believe everybody else got this question wrong. The correct answer is "no way. I'm still boycotting interleague play." Members did not express a strong particular interest in the Mariners-Marlins series, which is why our spring meeting was held in May.

22. Although the results are divided, 36 members expressed interest in informal, local evening get-togethers.

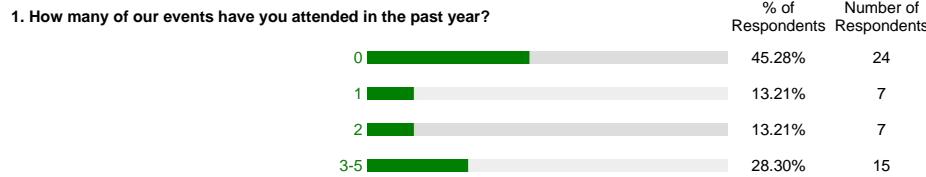
We will try to make this happen. We'll need to follow-up to find out where the interested people live. If you'd like to coordinate this for people in your area, please let me know.

23. and 24. These questions asked about local baseball book discussion groups and group outings to games. Considering our geographical dispersion, the results aren't tremendously encouraging. I urge the three people who said they would be willing to coordinate member activities to contact Rick (Seattle), Mary (Olympia), or me.

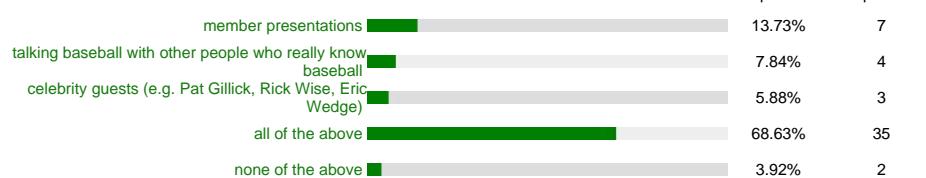
25. The last question was about baseball polls to learn what other members think. Response to this idea is great. We started with a poll about the all-time Mariners team. Participation was minimal and a couple of people skewed the results by not following the instructions. Still, I thought it was fun, and I'll try another one.

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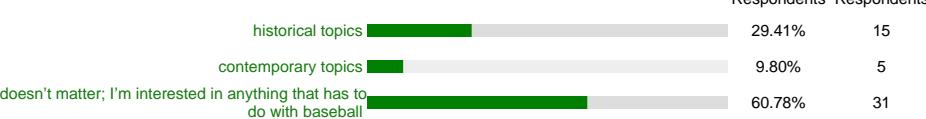
Does your reader

Page 1. Meetings**1. How many of our events have you attended in the past year?**

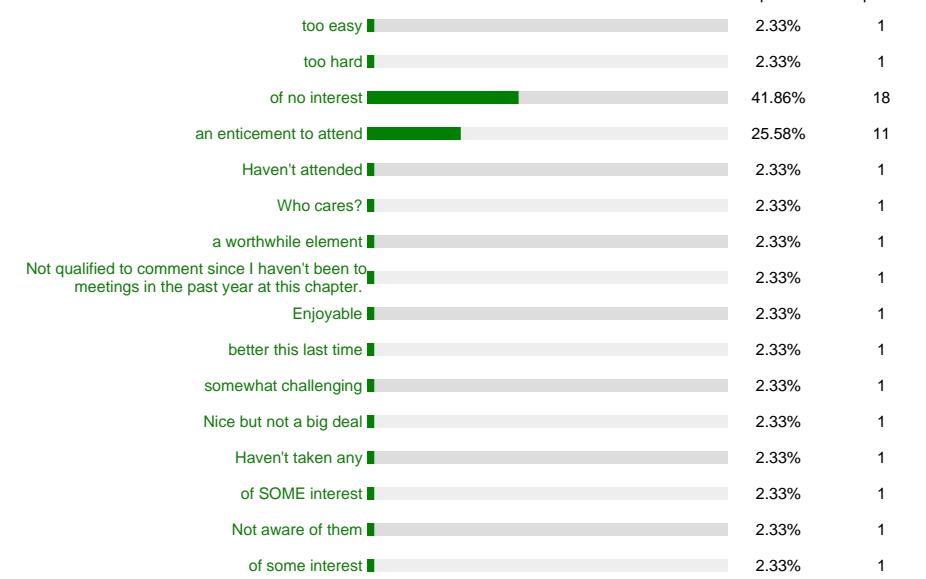
Number of respondents 52
Number of respondents who skipped this question 4

2. The main appeal of chapter meetings is

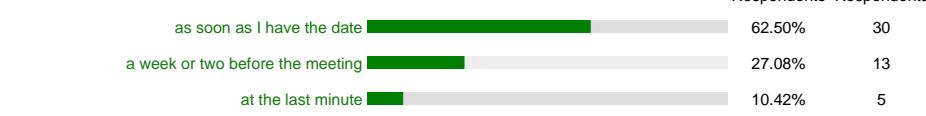
Number of respondents 51
Number of respondents who skipped this question 5

3. I'm more interested in

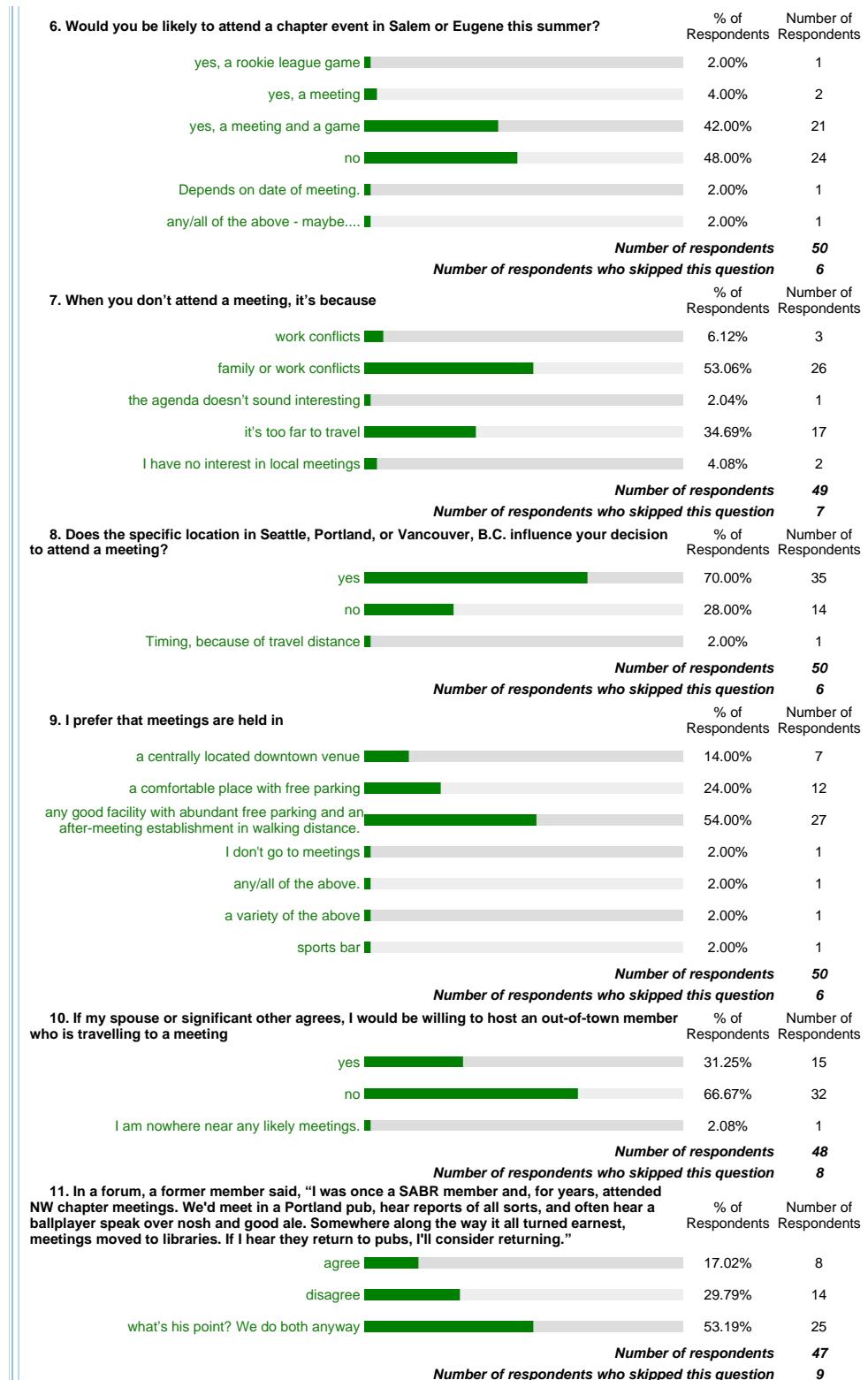
Number of respondents 51
Number of respondents who skipped this question 5

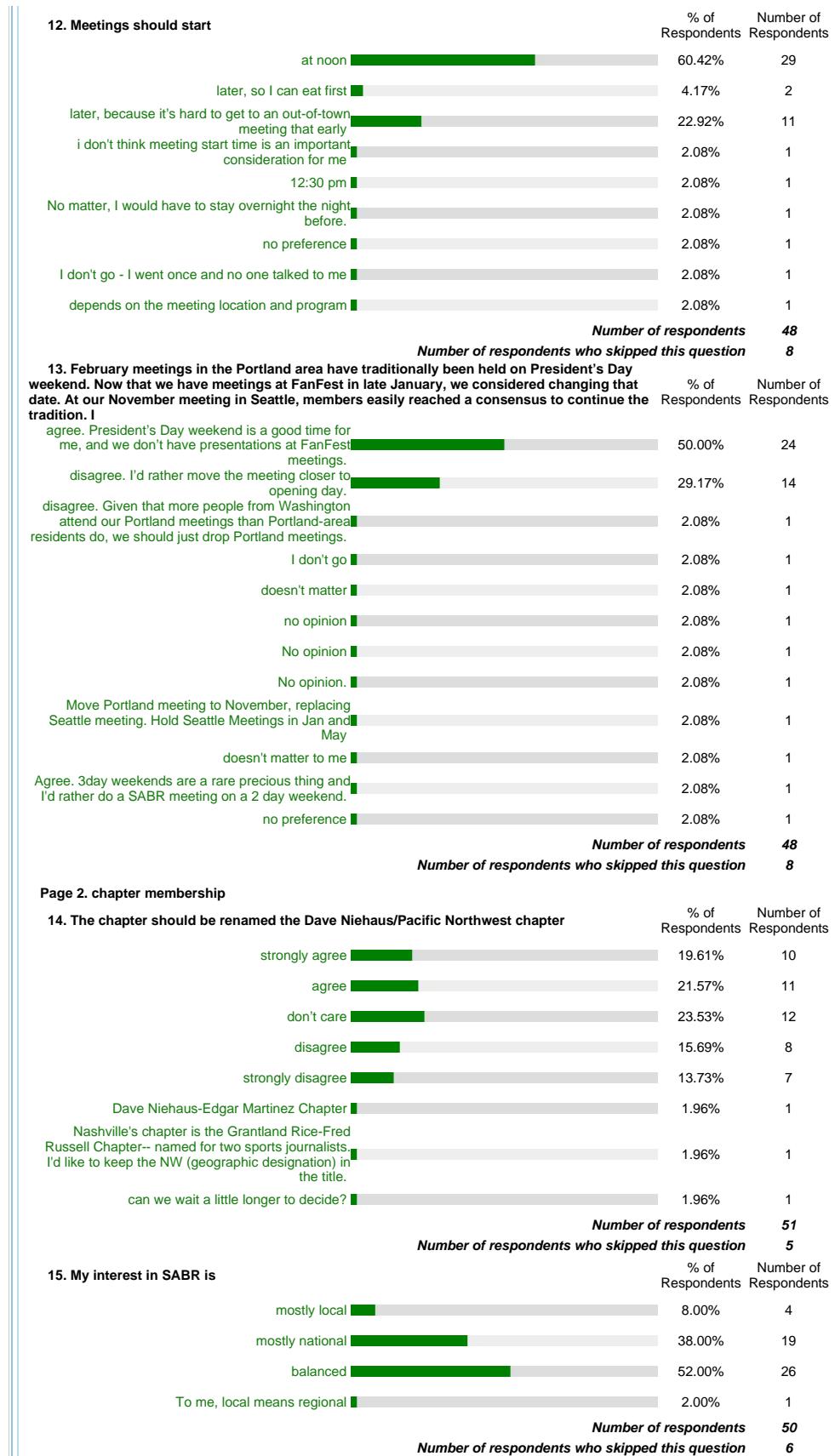
4. Trivia quizzes are

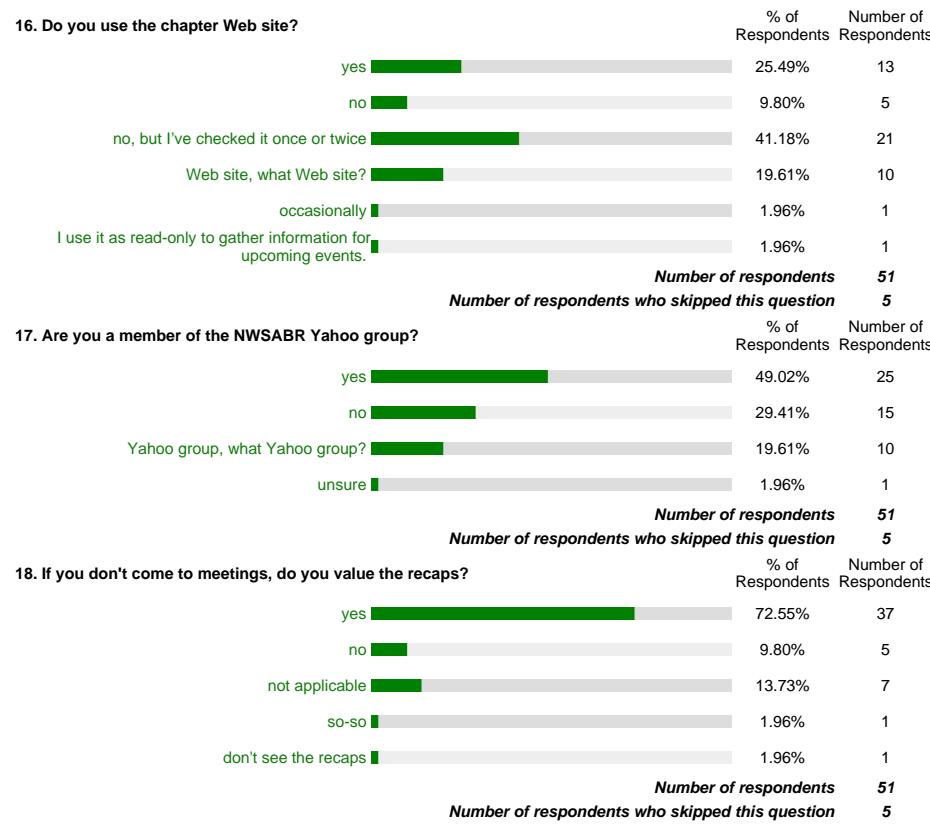
Number of respondents 43
Number of respondents who skipped this question 13

5. How far in advance of an event do you usually make a decision to attend?

Number of respondents 48
Number of respondents who skipped this question 8







19.

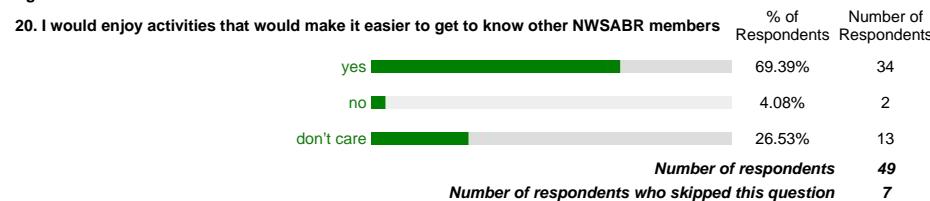
SABR currently manages the framework of our Web site. If adding additional types of content becomes possible in the future, what would you want to have?

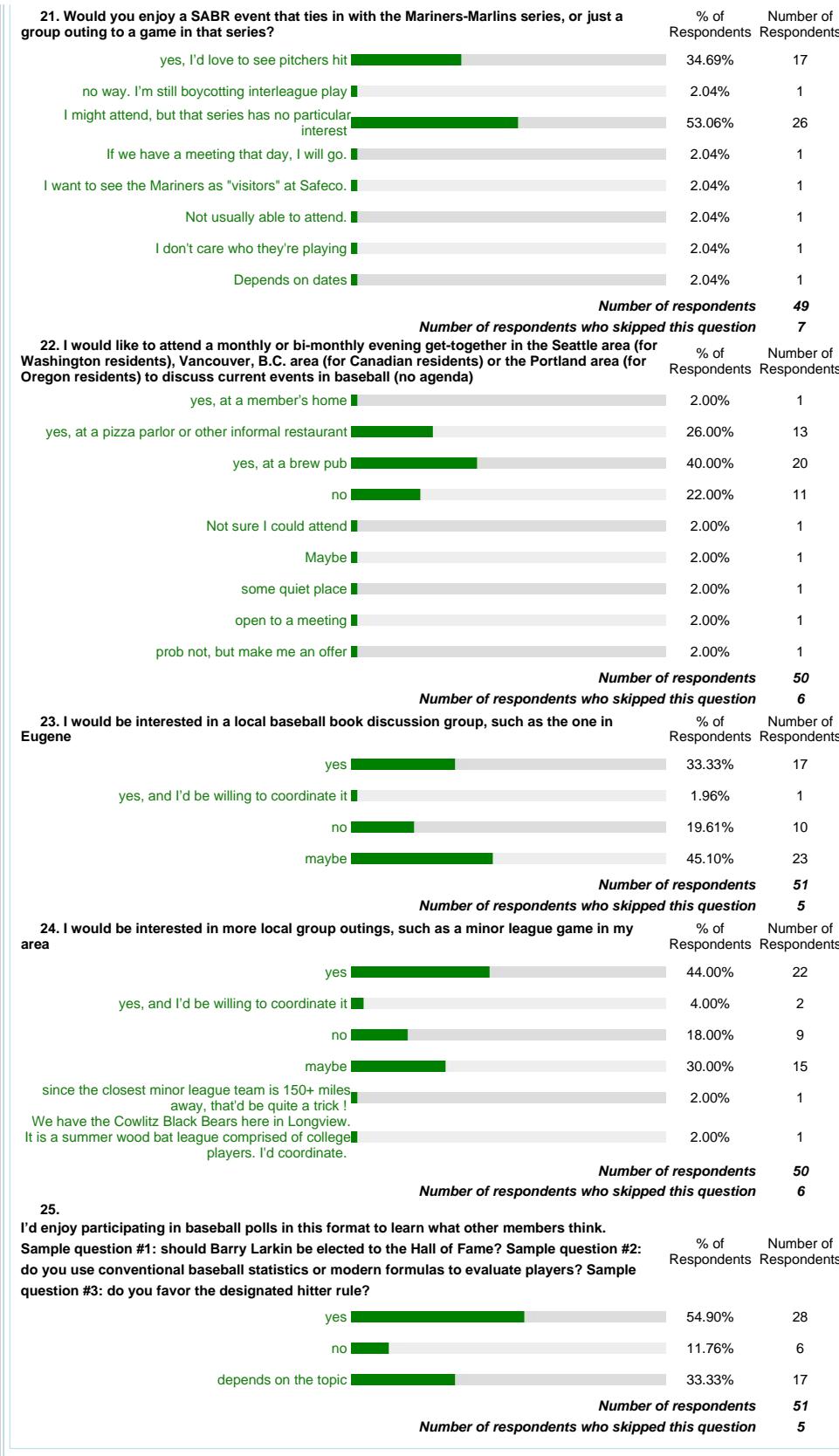
1. I have no idea?
2. northwest minor league content past or present
3. Material about baseball writers, announcers, etc. I'd be willing to present material in this area, maybe, even chair a new area about who brought the game to the public.
4. More links to historical information
5. I haven't reviewed many of the recaps, but thought the recap of the recent Portland meeting was excellent
6. links to good blogs and reference sites
7. Profiles of lesser known baseball personalities
8. I don't care about this

More news about what our chapter or people in it do - like - a while back, the chapter chipped in for a ballplayer's headstone and I thought that was cool and we should do more of that kind of thing, or get more involved in baseball
9. today (like being active supporters of RBI etc.). We probably have lots of members who coach or ump, we have lots who write books or blogs - it'd be cool to have lists.
10. N/A
11. photos
12. Up to date background and intros for new members. Local sub-committee meetings
13. I would like more links to baseball research resources.
14. Photos from the meetings; perhaps transcripts or recordings of presentations from meetings.
15. No opinion
16. Maybe a PDF or POWERPOINT version of the presentations that had just been made.
17. members' favorite pubs

Number of Respondents 17
Number of respondents who skipped this question 39

Page 4. Interconnectedness





Letter to the Editor

This letter to the editor was published in the May 31 *Oregonian*:

Sliding into Juneuary

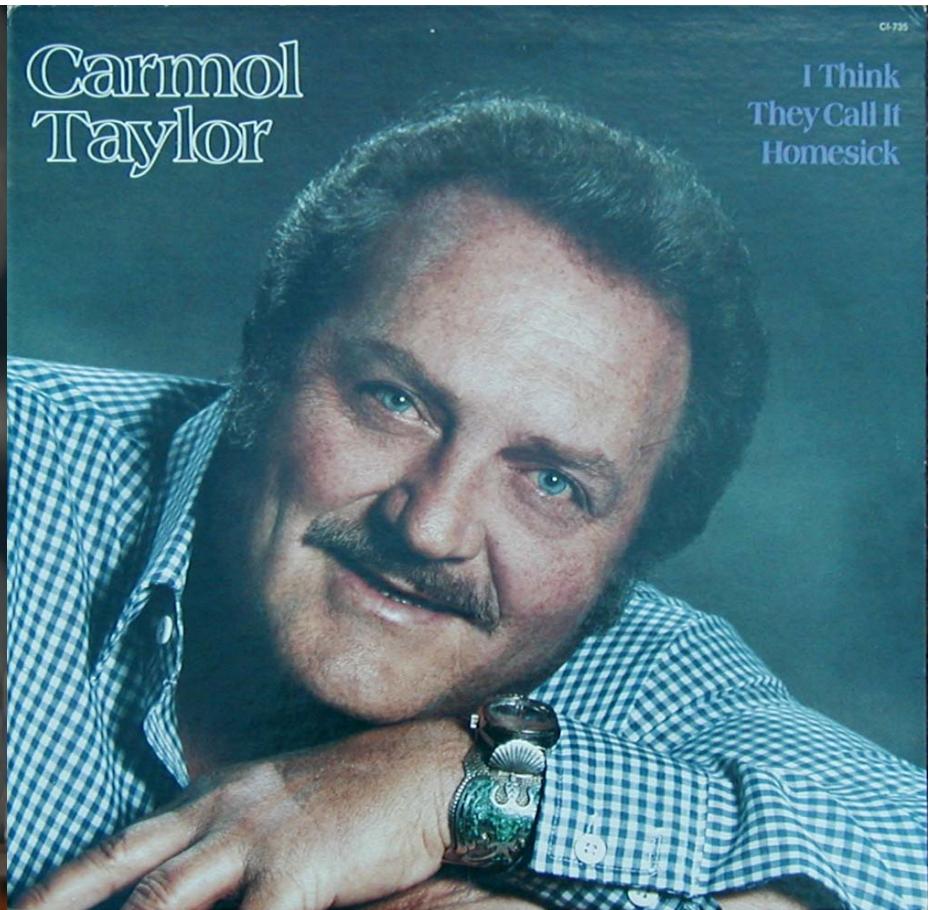
To those still seeking explanation of our perpetual February weather pattern, I recommend the children's book "How Georgie Radbourn Saved Baseball." The book tells the story of a bitter ex-baseball star who becomes a politician and outlaws baseball. The absence of baseball prevents the beginning of spring, and winter goes on forever.

With that in mind, consider the weather pattern we've endured since the Portland Beavers left town.

John Tapogna
Northeast Portland



Separated at Birth?



Eric Wedge - top and bottom left

Carmol Taylor - top right

From All Music Guide:

Carmol Taylor was best known as a honky-tonk songwriter, but he was also a talented performer. He was born in Brilliant, Alabama and began playing professionally in his early teens. When he was about 15, Taylor teamed up with Billy Sherrill to form Carmol Taylor and the Country Pals. The group stayed together for over 20 years, and between 1954 and 1974 played on a number of Southern radio stations. He launched his recording career in 1955, and in the early '60s he and the Pals began hosting a television show out of Columbus, Mississippi, where they performed for nine years.

Old Chapter Newsletters

NWSABR has an interesting and entertaining history, and much of it has been well documented. You can now access that documentation online. I know that many of you collect baseball books, cards, memorabilia, and forgetabilia. You may think this is un-American, but I'm in the opposite mode: I'm trying to have fewer possessions. One way I've been doing that is by scanning and then shredding or recycling paper. I do it as a background activity while I'm listening to ballgames on the radio.

I've scanned my collection of NWSABR newsletters and posted them on our Yahoo group site. In the process, I discovered that Paul Andresen had already posted the newer (post-print era) newsletters there. Jacob Pomrenke in the SABR office will be posting the scanned newsletters on the SABRNation site. Access is free to all members.

At one time, SABR allowed people to be members of a local chapter without being members of the national organization. We paid \$5 local dues whether or not we were national members. That covered copying and mailing the newsletters. When SABR changed its policy, we paid \$5 for a newsletter subscription. When the overwhelming majority of our members had Internet access, we switched to producing PDF newsletters. With further advances in communication capability—culminating in our chapter Web site—regular production of newsletters became unnecessary.



My collection dates to the late 1980s. About half of the newsletters were mostly written by chapter presidents and about half were mostly written by Paul Andresen. These are not stodgy, analytical, news-filled documents; they are lively, humorous, thought-provoking, controversial, and filled with comic strips about baseball. Some have trivia quizzes. Many address issues that were topical at the time and the current state of the Mariners. Some contain predictions. I especially recommend reading the oldest newsletters, which were written by Marc Jones.

One aspect of these newsletters may annoy you. You'll find inside jokes and first-name-only references to people you don't know. We are now making great progress toward more inclusiveness and less of the old-boy network. The really sad aspect of these newsletters, though, is that we've prematurely lost at least three chapter presidents: Chuck Partington, Steve Charak, and Paul Andresen. I hope the re-sharing of these newsletters is one way to preserve their legacy and remember the great contributions they made to NWSABR and our knowledge of baseball.

As for the hard copies (why don't they call them floppy copies?), they're yours. I'll be giving them away as door prizes and trivia contest prizes at meetings.

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Vice President

chapter
officers
2011-2012

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Secretary

Tim Herlich, Seattle
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Seattle, Treasurer



I've come to the conclusion that the
two most important things in life
are good friends and a good bull-
pen. ~Bob Lemon, 1981

If it weren't for baseball, many kids
wouldn't know what a millionaire
looked like. ~Phyllis Diller

