

# HMGS East Director Candidates' Biographies

## Kevin Combs

My reasons for wanting to join the HMGS East Board of Directors are simple – to diligently serve you and represent the membership, to aggressively promote and grow our hobby, and to conscientiously preserve and maintain the conventions and programs that we have, with credit due to the hard work that it took to build this organization.

I have been an avid gamer since 1972, and began miniatures gaming in college when I could not afford lead figures and fought battles using GDW's System-7. I've supported HMGS Conventions as an Game Master since 1992.

Looking around at any of our conventions, one can see that we are getting older, while at the same time, we are not attracting the "new-blood" gamers we need to survive and thrive. This issue not only affects our convention attendees, but more-so our dealers and HMGS East as a non-profit corporation as well. If HMGS East is going to thrive, we must all work collectively to grow the hobby.

With that said, I offer three personal Qualifications and strengths that support these goals: leadership, experience, and a passion for military history. I believe all of these will be an asset to the Board of Directors, and to HMGS East.

\* I am currently the Deputy Chief Information Officer for one of the largest agencies in the State of Maryland. Every day I am tasked to direct assignments that affect most Maryland citizens. Taking the lead and delivering results is what my professional job is all about, and I take those responsibilities seriously.

\* As for experience relevant to HMGS, I served on the board of another 501(c)3 corporation for four years (two as president). I have a firm understanding of the dynamics of a BoD environment, and how to translate that into running day-to-day business and for growth.

\* Last but not least, I feel my own passion for military history will ensure a focus on the true purpose of HMGS is never forgotten. I have a B.A. working on a Masters' in Military History. Frankly, I love history, and I see HMGS as a unique opportunity to all share that passion.

While I have many friends in HMGS, I am beholding to none, other than to the general membership if elected. While I have several ideas in mind, I foremost seek to communicate plans and objectives of real issues, without immersing everyone in routine operations. As an executive, I will lead; as an IT professional I am better qualified than most to understand what challenges we face as we upgrade our systems; and finally as a long-time HMGS member, I will respect your vision of our future. I will work hard to support and maintain our conventions and standards, while seeking new opportunities to increase our membership number and prestige.

Please take the time to vote, and I will appreciate your support. To these ends, I offer my time, skill and experience to membership as a responsive representative of yours on the Board.

## Paul Delaney

Growing up I had the fortune, or misfortune, to have an eccentric uncle who loved to play with toy soldiers (and still does). I, being an impressionable boy, thought he was the greatest thing since chocolate milk, and still have a good time hanging out with him.

We played games for hours with our armies, and every chance we had we would go to some of the local hobby shops to purchase our Airfix men and Roco Minitanks. Growing up in the Washington, DC area was great. We had Corres Hobby Shop, Alexandria Arts in Crafts, ABC Hobby Shop, The Squadron Shop, and a few others that the names have now slipped my mind over time.

As a teenager I had the good luck to find a new hobby shop near my home. It was the Little Solder in Alexandria, Virginia. The shop was owned by Dennis Largess. During its first summer, at this location on North Fairfax Street, I met a now long time friend and we played our first game together. It was an ECW game with the old strip 15mm Minifigs. That was 1978, and Bill Rutherford has been close friend of mine and my family ever since.

This year at Cold Wars, I was reading the convention program and was surprised to see that the first HMGS convention had been held 25 years ago. I helped run, and played in, a modern Micro-Armor game. I didn't realize at the time what was to happen and how the conventions would stay part of my life.

The reason I give such a long detail of my childhood gaming is to press a point. I am a strong believer that one should give back to their community. This community has given me a lot of long term friendships and hours of enjoyment over the years.

I know I can fulfill the tasks of a board member of HMGS, and contribute to the growth of our hobby. I established and currently help run a gaming club for kids (The Young Lions, this name came from another friend), and have taken them on fieldtrips to conventions. The look in their eyes the first time I bring a new gamer to a convention is always amazing.

I have experience as a board member and past-president with another non-profit organization, Alexandria Potomac Little League. While serving as president of the APLL, registration reached an all-time high with over 450 kids playing in the League. The responsibility and the safety of the children being my highest concern, it is a major task.

I've been married to my wife, Michelle, for 18 years, and have two boys who are now enjoying gaming, Paulie, 13 and Connor, 8. I've work for the largest family owned parking businesses in Washington, DC, for nearly 20 years. As a senior manager, I'm responsible for a team of more than 100 employees operating 30 retail facilities.

I look forward to serving you as an HMGS board member.

## Don Manser

For the last two years I have had the honor to serve the HMGS membership as the VP for Education, Tournament Liaison and Election Committee member. I have enjoyed every minute of my time and look forward to another two years of service to HMGS. Whether or not I deserve another term is entirely up to you.

My platform has not changed from that which I presented to you, the membership, nearly two years ago. I still strongly believe that the HMGS Board of Directors exists to serve the membership by offering three annual events, operating in a manner that is fiscally responsible and promoting the miniatures hobby for the good of the membership.

The three conventions, Cold Wars, Historicon and Fall In, are your HMGS trademark events. They have been successful despite winter storms, economic pressures and at times lack of space. The success of these events is due to the current cooperation between game masters, convention directors and board members that did not exist in 2006 when I became a board member. Communication and teamwork have been the key elements of success in this area. Were this not the case, we would never have been able to secure events like the Flames of War World Championships. While there will always be problems, we have built relationships, developed and established levels of understanding that have brought parties closer together. The result is events that are safe, profitable, fiscally responsible and above all enjoyable for the membership.

The primary question regarding events is the potential Historicon move. I am not yet decided on whether we should move. I will however make a decision only when I have considered all available input from members, exhibitors, fellow board members and have an actual pro rata proposal comparing the current and proposed Historicon sites with actual contracts in hand.

Fiscal responsibility is part of my duty to you. By supporting the National History Day organizations that appreciate and appropriately award funds given them by HMGS, I have been able to both trim the education budget and continue to support deserving children interested in history. There are also funds set aside for the Military Forum publication. This collection of peer-reviewed papers has the potential to attract prominent academics to HMGS to provide new information, perspectives, lectures etc. and further characterize HMGS as an organization that values and promotes new ideas in military history.

Transparency and expediency have been hallmarks of my time on the HMGS board. Yes, there was a problem with the newsletter, but it has been fixed. We have resolved the ugliness of a board member being wrongly and inappropriately removed. Through much hard work and a referendum we have put that decision into the hands of the membership. Board administrative duties and obligations are current and up to date. The budget for 2008 was ratified in 2007.

The bottom line is that you now have a functioning Board of Directors.

Your continued support will ensure this trend.  
Thank you.

# HMGS East Director Candidates' Biographies

## Dan McDonagh

I am offering my time, effort and expertise to serve you, HMGS, and our hobby both earnestly and humbly. I will dedicate the energy of my convictions to leading and/or following wherever I am needed.

I have been an avid active gamer and game-master for nearly 40 years. I began gaming with historical miniatures in high school in the 1960's. In college, I was the Wargaming Club President at The Citadel. Later, as a US Naval Officer I conducted tactical wargaming, and was a key player on the Operational Test Team for the PC-driven tabletop naval war game. I later graduated from the Naval War College and returned to serve in the War Gaming Department there, the most junior officer to be selected as a Branch Chief. I wargamed Desert Storm and briefed the Secretary of the Navy on the outcome. I was then sent to Desert Storm (I guess he didn't like the briefing), and 13 months later and returned to the War College – one of only two officers ever invited for a second tour. I offer my project management skills from those years in both the Navy and private sector to serve HMGS East.

I've served for many years as an HMGS Convention Staffer and Game Master, and understand much of HMGS's operations, having served as Fall-In! Events Coordinator for three years in three different sites. I served on the BoD in 2006, and my peers appointed me as Executive Vice President. I've also learned much from helping to produce other conventions like Origins, GenCon and DragonCon.

I have four overriding goals as a Board member:

1. Our Convention Programs come first. With great conventions, all else becomes possible. Bigger/better cons means more gamers, more GM's, more games, which inspire all to buy more from our vendors, which helps our gaming industry and conventions grow more.
2. Fiscal responsibility and responsible management. With sound finances and meticulous BoD management, our convention programs, organization, and hobby are secure from harm for decades.
3. Stabilize the Newsletter. We've seen irregular Newsletter production in recent years. Missed issues, changed format or content. I worked briefly to improve our Newsletter but my BoD term expired and I seek to continue my unfinished work to make this a strength for us.
4. The Historical Miniatures Gaming Industry. We must avoid any practices that intensify financial hardship upon our historical gaming industry. We want to induce growth where appropriate as we are ALL members of the hobby of Historical Miniatures Gaming, Gamers, Convention management AND vendors alike.

I want to represent you, the member, and ensure our resources are competently invested back into convention quality, to induce increased attendance, and to ensure HMGS East Serves the our membership and our hobby. Just as I worked successfully on the HMGS East BoD before, I ask your support in allowing me to once-again serve you faithfully.

## George F. Nafziger.

I have been wargaming since 1962. In 1977 my Napoleonic rules, Pas de Charge, were published. I've been coming to HMGS conventions since about 1985. I was very active writing for Empires, Eagles & Lions and wrote for it until it went out of business.

I have had 13 hardbound history books published. I have self-published about 90 of my own works on military subjects. My first hardbound work - Napoleon's Invasion of Russia - was used by the US Army's Command and General Staff College as course supplementary material. My most recent work, Islam at War, has been given to US State Department personnel as a reference on the military history of Islamic world.

I own The Nafziger Collection, Inc., which publishes over 190 historical works and sells orders of battle. I am the CEO of Les Batiments, which produces resin model buildings.

I presented a paper at an academic symposium in Alessandria Italy on the bicentennial of the battle of Marengo. I have spoken at the following conventions: West Point, Origins, Little Wars, Historicon, and others.

Education: BS in Industrial Technology, MBA in Management, Ph.D. in Military History.

Military Experience: Commissioned in 1971 as an Ensign, USN. Two tours in Vietnam. Transferred to the Naval Reserves in 1975. Served in the reserves from 1975 to 1995, when I retired as a Captain.

Business Experience: I am CEO of The Nafziger Collection, Inc., and Les Batiments, LLC. As a civilian I worked for Corning Glass as a shift supervisor, with General Tire as an auditor, and worked at "Mound", a Dept. of Energy weapons factory, for 20 years in numerous capacities. When it closed I went into business for myself, supplementing that with part-time work. My principal self-employment under the umbrella of the Nafziger Collection. In addition, I do part-time work for Northrop-Grumman at the Battle Command Training Program where I work as a paid, professional wargamer. I also work in the Dept. of State ACOTA Program, in western Africa where I train officers of African armies in UN peacekeeping operations (in French).

PHILOSOPHY: I believe that the hobby is not growing and that positive steps need to be taken to grow it or accommodate to the changes that are occurring both in the hobby and the economy so as to keep it a viable hobby for those of us that continue to take pleasure in it. The board has already taken many steps to deal with this and I believe that I can bring new ideas and new approaches to this problem. I do not subscribe to the "we've always done it this way" approach to things, but am unwilling to change solely for the sake of change. I will listen to anyone who has an idea and use it in whole or part as opportunity and circumstances permit. I've long subscribed to the idea that the best leader listens to those who follow.

## Pete Panzeri

Thank you for your support during the past four years, two as BoD President. I retire from the Army soon (after 30 years) and given that unexpected free time, I'm seeking to serve one final-term to finish the work I've started. Rather than cite credentials, I refer all interested to <http://jodiecon.org/about.php>.

Foremost, I seek to represent you, the Membership. Email or call anytime to voice concerns or resolve issues [president@hmgs.org](mailto:president@hmgs.org) or (260) 402-3600.

I first joined the BoD to "grow our hobby and support our historical gaming industry," with ONE major big objective:

"To ensure proposals to relocate Historicon did not end in a disaster. That would threaten the future of HMGS, our historical gaming industry and the hobby itself."

My first two months on the BoD, I fought successfully to help halt a premature move to Valley Forge, PA. I didn't make many friends in taking that action. But, as odd as it may sound, I have no friends when it comes to preserving our hobby. I also personally initiated and chaired a BoD Committee to plan and scrutinize all Historicon move proposals.

I have been neither FOR, nor AGAINST Historicon Relocation, but seek only to be "the honest broker" so that it's done right, or not at all. We all want Historicon to grow and thrive, but none want to relocate by trail and error. Failure is far too costly. We can admit that "If we grow, we will outgrow" and "If we never move, we have failed to grow." Therefore, we MUST PREPARE to make the right move, to the right place, and only at the right time.

But "Relocation" is not the sole issue. During my term as President, I imposed a BoD Task-List so we can hold each other (me too) to account for timely execution of BoD duties. I personally composed and the BoD passed election reform policies to prevent fraud. I personally fought (again not making friends) to correct practices leading to tens of thousands of dollars in unaccounted-for expenditures (over 4 years ago) And as president, I led the BoD to the final accomplishment of a long term overhaul of our financial accountability system. I've also insisted we continue to successfully deliver detailed and accurate financial reports to the membership. HMGS East has never been more solvent and transparent financially, and with better checks and balances system than we have achieved over the past few years.

While I served as Convention Operations Director, I oversaw the installation of three new energetic, adept Convention Directors. Convention attendance and income have increased exceptionally, and we have invested heavily in the quality of our conventions. I've remained committed to cultivating, stimulating and protecting our historical industry where we can. Overall, I'm entirely committed to seeing HMGS continue to operate as a competent and successful convention-producing organization.

If you find my commitments compatible with yours, then I ask you to please re-elect me to the HMGS East Board of Directors.