

## 2011 USBC Convention Report

The 2011 USBC Convention in Arlington, Texas was called to order by President Darlene Baker July 1, 2011. There were 1,024 delegates in attendance.

State and local associations that made significant monetary contributions to the BVL (the Bowlers to Veterans Link) were recognized for their contributions. California was the leading state with \$123,000.00 in donations; Michigan ranked 10<sup>th</sup> with \$14,000.00 in donations.

It was announced that there would be a new exhibit in the International Bowling Hall of Fame and Museum recognizing "50 Years of Women's Pro Bowling".

Strategic Planning Committee chairman Libbi Fletcher reported that USBC has a new mission statement and a new vision. The new mission statement is: To provide benefits, resources and programs that enhance the bowling experience. The new vision is to create lifelong bowlers.

In her President's report Darlene Baker stated that one of USBC's goals is to improve communication with members. That is why they are making a sincere effort to collect accurate email addresses of bowlers. Technology is the most efficient means of communication and it seems to be what the members want.

President Baker addressed the Women's National Championship Tournament. Yes, the women will be travelling to Reno for the next four years, and this is why. Even though women's tournament participation goes down every year, tournament entries go down less when the tournament is in Reno. It costs about \$1,400,000.00 to construct bowling lanes in a convention center. Holding the tournament in Reno four years in a row will save on the cost of lane construction. The women's tournament consistently operates at a loss. If there is not a turn around in women's tournament participation, the women's National Tournament, as we know it, may change.

USBC conducted a test of different membership products in a variety of associations --- some large, some small, some merged and some unmerged. This was done because it is a fact the "one size does not fit all" when it comes to a membership package. So a variety of membership packages and costs were tested. Unfortunately, we, the USBC Delegates, were not given the results of the tests. Instead we were told that further testing will be done again this year. Your Grand Rapids Delegates were very disappointed not to hear the results of the tests.

There will be 15 to 20 different test markets this year. Each test site will offer one membership package. The season 2012-2013 may see a limited roll out of some of the new concepts with the 2013-2014 season seeing more.

Executive Director Stu Upson reported USBC's membership at about 2 million members --- a 6% decrease from the year before. Open Championship Tournament participation has also declined. The 2012 Open Championship Tournament will be held in Baton Rouge, LA.

However, participation in the Youth Junior Gold and National Championship Tournaments increased 7% and 9%, respectively. There are currently 5,000 high school bowlers in 20 states; there are 192 colleges/universities with bowling teams representing 3,390 athletes --- an increase of 8%.

USBC has teamed up with a new travel site called: [www.mybowlingvacation.com](http://www.mybowlingvacation.com). This website can be accessed to make travel arrangements for the USBC National Tournaments including hotels, airlines and rental cars.

USBC will be offering a new Youth membership called "Roll and Grow". It is an \$8.00 membership aimed at youth 7 years old and younger. This will be a less expensive way to introduce young ones to bowling.

The Standard Youth membership will remain at \$17.00 and bowlers will receive a newly designed Youth jersey as part of their membership package.

The USBC rule book will only be printed every two years. The entire rule book may be downloaded from [www.bowl.com](http://www.bowl.com) and apps are now available so the rule book can be downloaded to ipads, iphones, Kindles, etc. Instructions can be found on [www.bowl.com](http://www.bowl.com).

USBC is offering two new league achievement awards --- both lapel pins. They are for 75 pins over average in a game and 140 pins over average in a series. Yes, the magnets are still here, also! The 300 and 800 rings have been redesigned. Check [www.bowl.com](http://www.bowl.com) for the new look. Your league secretary also has pictures of the new designs.

USBC has continued its partnership with the Susan G. Komen Foundation. In our 11 year relationship with them, we, the bowlers, have raised \$952,000.00!

Legislative Committee chairman Tamoria Adams presented three proposed amendments for the delegates' consideration. The first proposal would have lowered the age of bowlers in a senior league from 55 to 50 years old. This proposal was defeated by the delegates.

The second proposal was much more controversial. It would have required ALL associations --- local and state --- to become merged associations by August 1, 2012. As expected, the proposed amendment was amended to put off the forced merger until August 1, 2013. Obviously there was much discussion by the delegates.

Because this legislation was a proposed change to the USBC Bylaws it required a two-thirds (66%) majority to pass, not a simple majority. It was a closer vote than the last time this vote was taken. But ultimately the delegates once again defeated the proposal. In favor of the forced merge were 54% of the delegates, not the 66% needed. This piece of legislation will be back in the near future.

The third proposed amendment required that anyone seeking election to the USBC Board of Directors have all of their credentials to the Nominating Committee 30 days prior to the opening of the Annual Meeting. The current rule is to have credentials in by 24 hours prior to the opening of the meeting. This proposal passed easily.

Elected to the USBC Board of Directors were: Darlene Baker, incumbent; Marci Williams, incumbent; Jo Dimond and Bill Vint. For your information, at their Board Meeting following the USBC Convention, Darlene Baker was not re-elected by the USBC Board to serve another term as President. The new USBC President is Jim Stuurm, a bowling proprietor, from West Virginia.

One of the highlights our time in Arlington was witnessing the finals of the US Women's Open Championship Tournament in the Dallas Cowboys Stadium. What a facility! 300 women from 17 countries competed for the 5 coveted step ladder positions. This event was covered live by ESPN Sports.

The step ladder finals were: Lynda Barnes (5) defeated Shannon O'Keefe (4) 268-166; Lynda Barnes (5) defeated Liz Johnson (3) 259-225; Leanne Hulsenberg (2) defeated Lynda Barnes (5) 247-246; title match Leanne Hulsenberg (2) defeated Kelly Kulick (1) 218-183. Leanne took home a check for \$50,000.

On behalf of your Grand Rapids 2011 USBC Delegates: Bob Dunlap, Sharon Schildroth, Roger Schildroth, Pat Hirst, Shirley Avery, Rich Smith and myself, Cherylle Secl-Cross, thank you, thank you for allowing us to serve you!