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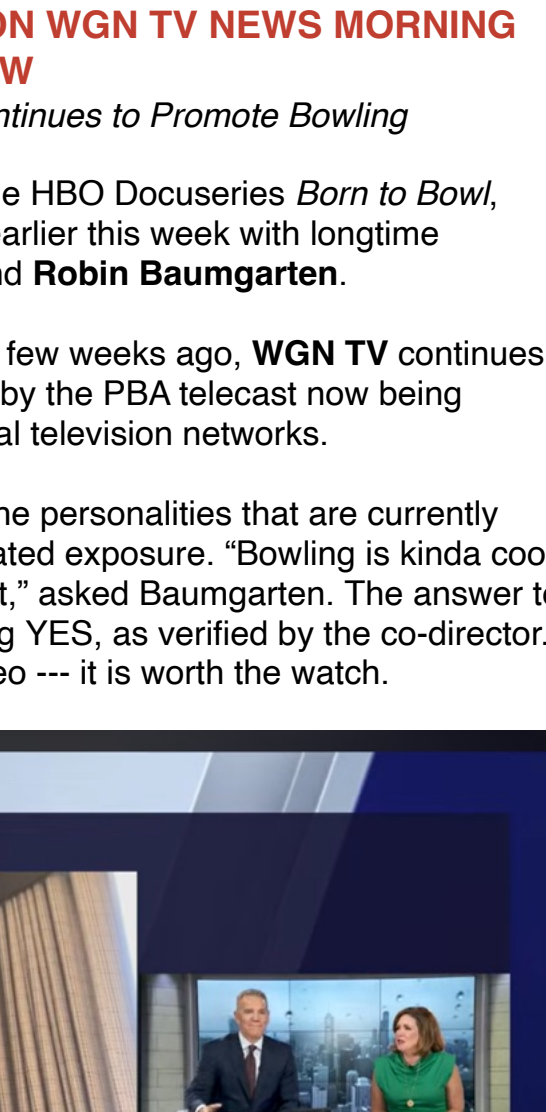
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ISBPA LAUNCHES SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN! WE NEED YOUR HELP TO SHARE!

The Illinois State BPA is launching its first social media campaign geared to promote bowling. The first post is with **Pete Weber** who was interviewed following the *Beat the Champs Target Show*. There will be one post each week for throughout the next couple of months.

To maximize exposure, we need your help. Please visit the [ISBPA FACEBOOK PAGE](#) and click the Share button (sideways arrow) so that your followers can view the image.

With your permission, we can also tag you for future submissions. To do that, please notify headquarters via email by [CLICKING PERMISSION](#).



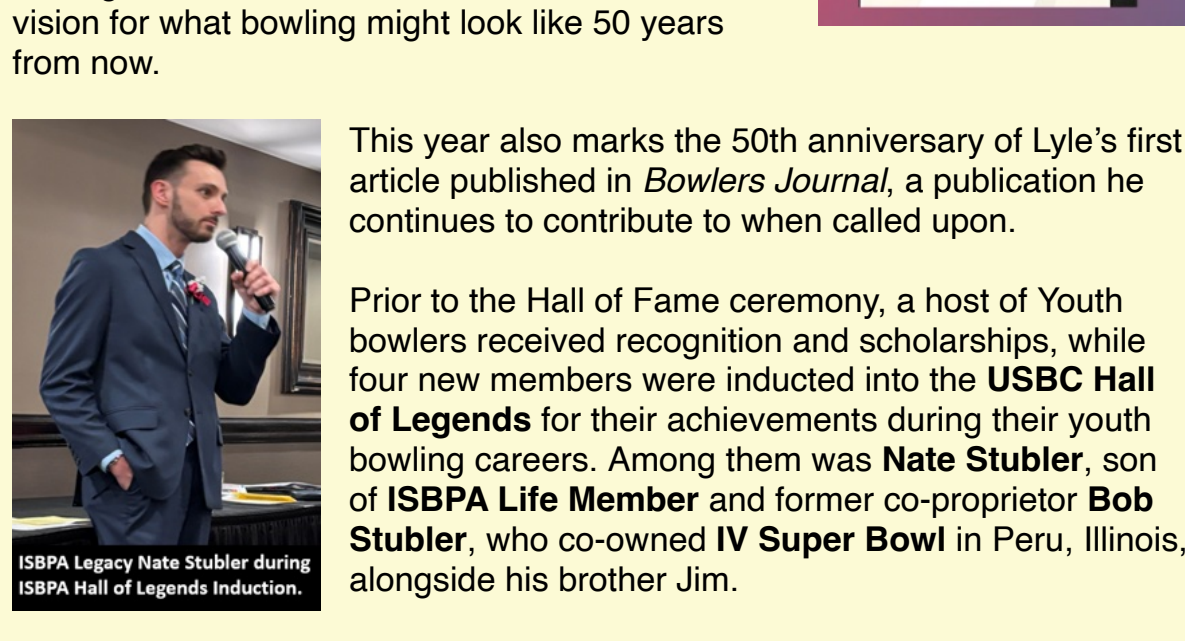
'BORN TO BOWL' FEATURED ON WGN TV NEWS MORNING SHOW

Local Television Networks Continues to Promote Bowling

James Lee Hernandez, co-director of the HBO Docuseries *Born to Bowl*, appeared on the *WGN Morning Show* earlier this week with longtime morning show co-hosts **Larry Potash** and **Robin Baumgarten**.

Following the Kyle Troup interview just a few weeks ago, **WGN TV** continues to promote bowling, perhaps spurred on by the PBA telecast now being featured on the CW Network / WGN Local television networks.

Hernandez spoke about the series and the personalities that are currently propelling bowling to a new level of elevated exposure. "Bowling is kinda cool again with the younger generation, isn't it," asked Baumgarten. The answer to the questions appears to be a resounding YES, as verified by the co-director. Click on the link below to access the video --- it is worth the watch.

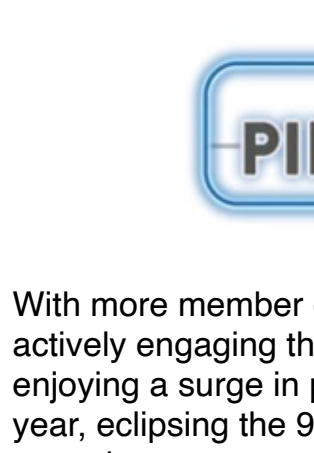


LYLE ZIKES INDUCTED INTO ILLINOIS USBC HALL OF FAME

Beverly Lanes Proprietor JAMES FATHER IN HALL OF FAME

Author, bowler, historian, coach, and bowling center owner **Lyle Zikes** was inducted into the **USBC State Hall of Fame** in Rockford, Illinois, on March 21, 2026. He was joined by **Billie Roberts** (Meritorious Service Category), **Tracey Anderson** and **Steve Rodgers** (Outstanding Bowler Category), and **Nancy Betts**, who was inducted in memoriam.

Notably, Lyle follows in the footsteps of his father, **Les Zikes**, who was inducted 50 years earlier in 1976. During his acceptance, Lyle honored his father and family, expressed gratitude to the Chicagoland and Illinois State BPAs, and shared a vision for what bowling might look like 50 years from now.



ISBPA Legacy Nate Stubler during ISBPA Hall of Legends Induction.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of Lyle's first article published in *Bowlers Journal*, a publication he continues to contribute to when called upon.

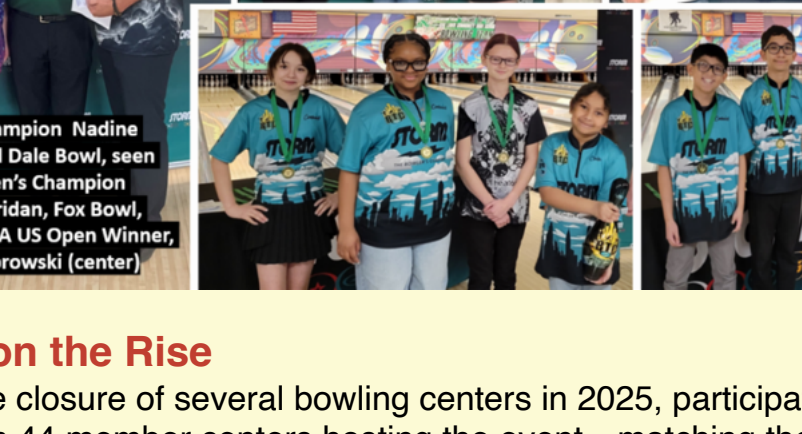
Prior to the Hall of Fame ceremony, a host of Youth bowlers received recognition and scholarships, while four new members were inducted into the **USBC Hall of Legends** for their achievements during their youth bowling careers. Among them was **Nate Stubler**, son of **ISBPA Life Member** and former co-proprietor **Bob Stubler**, who co-owned **IV Super Bowl** in Peru, Illinois, alongside his brother Jim.



Members from the CBPA & ISBPA joined Lyle for his induction.

COORS LIGHT PINS-OVER-AVERAGE ZONE FINALS SCHEDULE

Entries Trending at an Increase of 5% Higher than Prior Year



With more member center operators signing up 100% of their leagues and actively engaging their customers, the **Pins-Over-Average Tournament** is enjoying a surge in participation. Entries are up at least 5% compared to last year, eclipsing the 9,000 entry mark, thus highlighting our members commitment to growing the excitement around this event.

A total of 325 bowlers are advancing to the Zone Finals later this month, with a select 64 bowlers moving on to the finals in early May—all competing for the \$10,000 first-place prize. All participants have been notified of their assigned zones, and we look forward to seeing you at one of the exciting locations.

ZONE FINALS

- ZONE 1: April 11 – **Liberty Bowl** (Carpentersville) / Time: 1:00 pm
- ZONE 1: April 12 – **Rolling Lanes** (Countryside) / Time: 10:00 am
- ZONE 2: April 18 – **Burr Oak Bowl** (Blue Island) / Time: 10:00 am
- ZONE 1: April 19 – **Skyway Bowl** (Chicago) / Time: 10:00 am

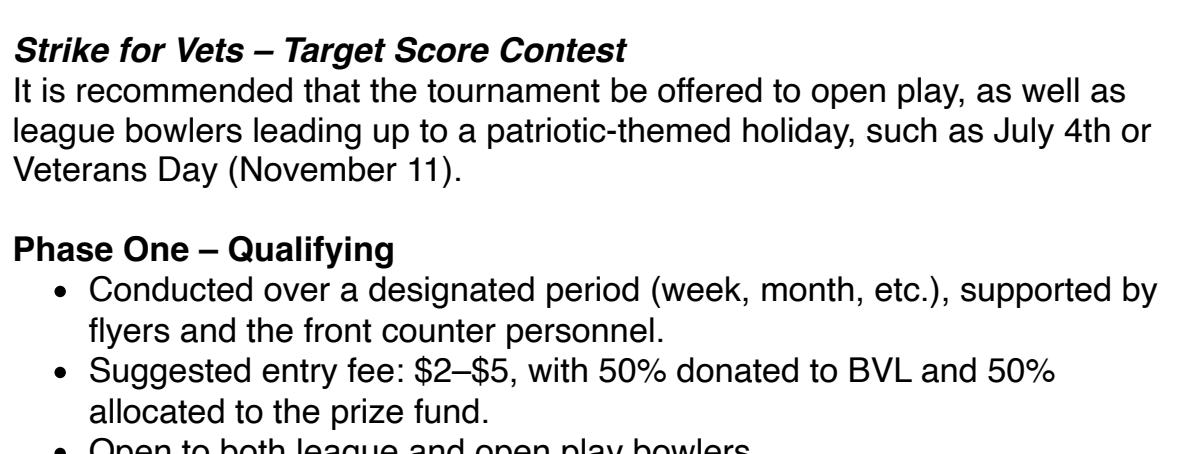
FINALS

May 2 – **Classic Bowl** (Morton Grove) / Time: 1:00 pm

BEAT THE CHAMPS DELIVERS GROWTH AND IMPACT

Total Entries on the Rise and Donations to BVL to be up 33%

As reported in the March 16, 2026 Special Bulletin, the **63rd Annual Beat the Champs Tournament** concluded on March 15, 2026, at **Palos Lanes** in Palos Hills, Illinois. The event crowned two new adult champions—**Anthony Sheridan** of **Fox Bowl** and **Nadine Louise Blecke** of **Wood Dale Bowl**—along with four Youth Champions. In addition to the titles achieved, there were several noteworthy achievements relating to the operations of the tournament.



THE 2026 BEAT THE CHAMPS TOURNAMENT FINALS @ PALOS LANES, MARCH 15, 2026

Entries on the Rise

Despite the closure of several bowling centers in 2025, participation remained strong, with 44 member centers hosting the event—matching the previous year.

Even more encouraging, total entries increased by 2.6%, with 14,890 bowlers competing compared to 14,510 in 2025.

- Adult Division: Entries rose 2.1%, growing to 13,883 from 13,597 the prior year.
- Youth Division: Continued its impressive momentum with double-digit growth, climbing 10.3% to 1,007 entries, up from 913 in 2025.

BVL Donations Continues to Grow

Continuing the proud tradition of this 63-year-old event, all net proceeds will be donated to charity, and for the third consecutive year, the Bowlers to Veterans Link.

In addition to this year's estimated net income, an extra \$3,315 was raised through a 50/50 raffle held during the Zone Finals—thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteers.

As a result, total contributions are expected to exceed \$14,500 --- a 33% increase over last year's contribution --- which will be presented at the BVL Luncheon during the USBC Convention. The event is anticipated to draw approximately 600 attendees, providing the opportunity to showcase the tournaments impact on a national stage.

NEW TOURNAMENT CONCEPT TO ENGAGE BOWLERS WHILE BENEFITING THE BOWLERS TO VETERANS LINK



During the recent **Illinois State BPA** Board of Directors Meeting, **Don Carter Lanes** executives **John Somer**, **Brad Sommer** and **Tony Hall**, presented a tournament concept that can be easily implemented and engage open play and league bowlers while supporting the **Bowlers to Veterans Link** (BVL). Here is the concept.

Strike for Vets – Target Score Contest

It is recommended that the tournament be offered to open play, as well as league bowlers leading up to a patriotic-themed holiday, such as July 4th or Veterans Day (November 11).

Phase One – Qualifying

- Conducted over a designated period (week, month, etc.), supported by flyers and the front counter personnel.
- Suggested entry fee: \$2–\$5, with 50% donated to BVL and 50% allocated to the prize fund.
- Open to both league and open play bowlers.
- Bowlers qualify for the Finals by throwing at least one strike in the 5th frame during any game.

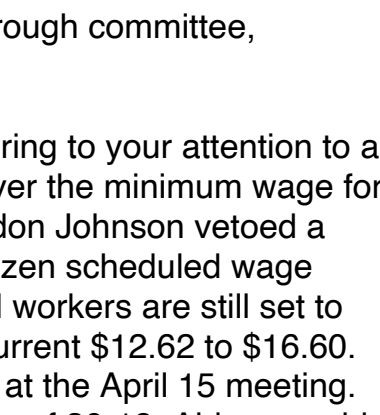
Phase Two – Finals

- Held on or near the selected holiday.
- Each finalist bowls two games (complimentary lineage is encouraged).
- Prior to competition, each bowler selects a target score.
- If the target score is achieved in Game 1, Game 2 is not required.
- One gutter ball per frame is permitted.
- Bowlers who hit their target score split the prize fund. If no one reaches their target, prizes may be awarded to those closest without going over.
- Prize distribution format is at the center's discretion, but it is recommended that every bowler who reaches his/her target score should split the pot.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the home office via email by [CLICKING HERE](#). If you would like to download an editable promotion piece (one at \$2.00 and a second at \$5.00), please [CLICK PROMOTION](#). (Note - if you use the provided document, you'll want to drop your logo somewhere above the BVL logo as there is not much room at the bottom of the form.)

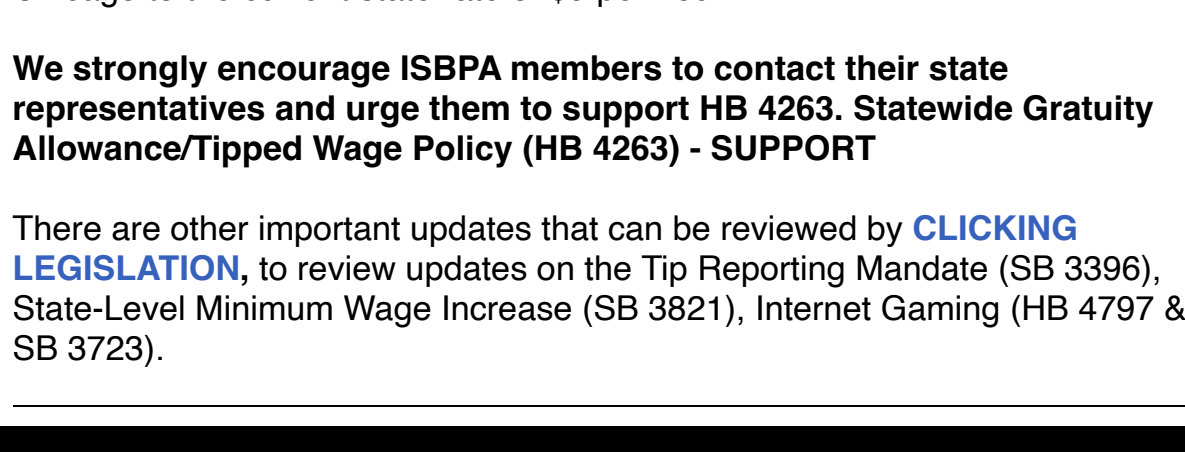
BRUNSWICK A2 MECHANIC SCHOOL REGISTRATIONS FILLING UP

Only a few spots remain for mechanics to join the four-day Brunswick A2 Mechanic School that will be held from June 15 - 19, at **Don Carter Lanes, Rockford, Illinois**. If interested, you may begin the process by reaching out to the ISBPA headquarters via email by [CLICKING REGISTRATION](#). The cost per mechanic is \$995, \$1,195 for non-member, which includes four full days of instruction, a continental breakfast and lunch. **Classic Products** will be providing the education, led by instructor **William Pike**.



June 15 - June 19 | 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., each day
Don Carter Lanes - 4007 E. State Street, Rockford, Ill. 61108
Price is \$995 per mechanic - Only a few Spots Remain Open
To access the agenda, click on >>>> [SCHEDULE](#)

TIME TO REGISTER FOR BOWL EXPO | BOOK ROOMS & TRAVEL



International Bowl Expo is just three months away and it is time to register for the convention and book your hotel before rooms become unavailable. Below is the schedule. For a more detail version of the schedule, including seminar information, [CLICK SCHEDULE](#). To register of the convention, click [BOWL EXPO REGISTRATION](#)

Sunday, June 28
1:00 – 5:00 pm BPAA Committee Meetings

Monday, June 29
9:00 – 10:30 am Breakfast and Networking
10:30 am – Noon Annual Meeting
1:30 – 5:00 pm BPAA Board of Directors Meeting
1:30 – 3:00 pm Workshops, sponsored by Brunswick Bowling
3:15 – 4:45 pm Workshops, sponsored by QubicaAMF
7:00 – 9:00 pm Welcome Reception

Tuesday, June 30
8:00 – 9:00 am Breakfast and Networking
9:15 – 11:30 am Concurrent Seminars
11:45 am – 1:45 pm Industry Awards Luncheon
2:00 – 4:15 pm Concurrent Seminars

Wednesday, July 1
8:00 – 9:00 am Breakfast & Networking Hour
9:00 – 11:00 am General Session featuring Drew Brees
11:00 am – 4:00 pm Trade Show and Exhibits
8:00 – 10:00 pm Dueling Pianos

Thursday, July 2
10:00 am – 3:00 pm Trade Show
7:00 – 10:00 pm Club Xpo – Grand Ole Opry House

ANY PUBLIC RELATION OPPORTUNITIES? CALL TRAVIS

The ISBPA PR Firm is at your Disposal



As we enter a time of year when compelling stories emerge daily in your bowling center, please remember that the ISBPA has resources available to help you share them effectively. Travis Akin of Catalyst Partners is available to guide you on the best ways to promote human-interest stories that resonate with audiences on social media. If you're interested, feel free to contact Travis Akin at 618-303-1108 or reach out via email by clicking [TRAVIS](#).

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES THAT REQUIRE MEMBER ATTENTION

by Trevon Sylvester

As the spring legislative session continues in Springfield, **Michael Best Strategies** is keeping a close eye on policy proposals that could impact Illinois bowling centers, from gaming and taxation to tipped wage credits and beyond.

The deadline has now passed for bills to advance out of committee in both chambers, bringing some clarity to which measures remain active this session. Several bills we opposed did not make it through committee, marking important wins for our members.

For those of you in the City of Chicago, we want to bring to your attention to a few developments related to the ongoing situation over the minimum wage for tipped workers in the city. As you know, Mayor Brandon Johnson vetoed a City Council ordinance last week that would have frozen scheduled wage increases for tipped workers. The veto means tipped workers are still set to receive the next increase on July 1, 2026 from the current \$12.62 to \$16.60. The council will have the opportunity to override him at the April 15 meeting. The ordinance originally passed city council on a vote of 30-18. Alders would need 34 votes to override the veto.

We encourage ISBPA members in the City of Chicago to contact their aldersons and urge them to override the Mayor's veto at the April 15 City Council meeting.

This is an important opportunity to support restaurants, bowling centers, and other hospitality businesses across the city. **In response to the Mayor's veto, we are strongly supporting HB 4263**, a bill pending in the Illinois House that would prohibit local governments like the City of Chicago from setting their own tipped wage mandates and require them to adhere to the state's tipped minimum wage. The measure advanced in the Illinois House Labor and Commerce Committee in a 22-4 vote on Thursday. If passed, it would supersede the mayor's veto and effectively lower the tipped wage in Chicago to the current state rate of \$9 per hour.

We strongly encourage ISBPA members to contact their state representatives and urge them to support HB 4263. Statewide Gratuity Allowance/Tipped Wage Policy (HB 4263) - SUPPORT

There are other important updates that can be reviewed by [CLICKING LEGISLATION](#), to review updates on the Tip Reporting Mandate (SB 3396), State-Level Minimum Wage Increase (SB 3821), Internet Gaming (HB 4797 & SB 3723).

ISBPA SUPPORTING MEMBERS | PRODUCTS & SERVICES

AVS COMPANIES
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750 Morse Ave., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
(847) 709-6213

AVS offers a full range of consulting services for bowling center arcades including layout design, game selection, attraction consulting, installation, training, warranty and parts.
[Website Email](#)

BRUNSWICK
Frank Marrese
231-343-3235
frank.marrese@brunswickbowling.com
Center Modernizations and Capital Equipment.
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CLASSIC PRODUCTS
Steve Jaros
4617 Industrial Road, Fort Wayne IN 46825
(260) 484-2695

Full line bowling distributor carrying a variety of bowling consumer and capital equipment brands
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INTERCARD, INC.
Lynda Brotherton Sherrod
1884 Lackland Hill Parkway, Ste. 1, St. Louis, MO
63146
(636) 799-3726 (636) 427-0000

(800) 732-3770, (314) 275-8066
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Chris Chartrand

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Justin Smith

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Chicago, IL. 60606
618-530-6061
Chain Sales Executive
The official Beer of the Illinois State BPA
[Website](#) [Email](#)



QUBICA AMF BOWLING

Dave Van Wyk

8100 AMF Drive Mechanicsville, VA 23111
(630) 309-2201
Manufacturer of bowling equipment
[Website](#) [Email](#)



SATORI ENERGY

Jim Orban

300 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606
312-850-2300, (F) 312-264-6200, (M) 630-561-1537
email: jorban@satorienergy.com
Energy services supplier: ISBPA's Electrical "Power Pool".
[Website](#) [Email](#)



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Nate Bukoski

500 Interpane Lane, Deerfield WI 53531
(888) 724-2695
Parts, supplies, capital equipment, and services/support.
[Website](#) [Email](#)



STORM BOWLING

Gary Hulsenberg

165 S. 800 W. Brigham City, UT 84302
(435) 723-0403
Bowling Ball and Accessory Manufacturer
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WESTERN BOWLING PROPRIETORS INSURANCE

Cameron Linder

1865 Herndon Ave Ste K, Clovis, CA 93611
(800) 200-9998
The official Insurance carrier of the ISBPA.
[Website](#) [Email](#)



GOLD LEVEL



ACE MITCHELL BOWLERS MART

Dean Billings

3365 Cavalier Trail, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223
(330) 920-6200, Mobile (330) 281-9136,
Office (800) 262-2695, Fax (330) 928-2132
Full line bowling distributor carrying a variety of bowling consumer and capital equipment brands
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Skip Wolfe

1949 Hidden Shores Dr., Dixon IL 61021
(815) 440-0681
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Paul Sylvia

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(888) 8DEXTER
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Smart HVAC, lighting, and energy procurement that saves bowling centers money—instantly.
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A member of the BPAA SMART BUY program, Horizon are experts in the design and/or implementation of your food service needs
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Felicia Watson

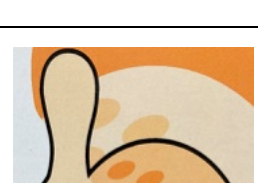
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KR STRIKEFORCE

Robin Blum

2020 Indian Boundary Drive, Melrose Park, IL 60160
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Bags, balls, rental shoes, pins and accessories.
[Website](#) [Email](#)



OPEN PLAY MARKETING

Kevin Malick

PO BOX 891207
Tampa, FL 33689
(863) 602-4850
Customer creation marketing services
[Email](#)



PROFESSIONAL BOWLERS ASSOCIATION

Mike Sledz

206-332-9688, Option #1
msledz@pba.com
Director of Membership / PBA
[Website](#) [Email](#)



KR STRIKEFORCE

Mike Stout / Brad Handelman

2020 Indian Boundary Drive, Melrose Park, IL 60160
(800) 297-8555
Bags, balls, rental shoes, pins and accessories.
[Website](#) [Email](#)



TRANSWORLD BUSINESS ADVISORS

Aaron McMann

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Transworld Business Advisors
130 W. Liberty, #200 Wheaton, IL, 60187
815.260.8412
Mergers, Acquisitions and Business Advisors
[Website](#) [Email](#)



TRIPLE SHIFT ENTERTAINMENT

Robby Spigner

563 Bielenberg Drive, Suite 115
Woodbury, MN 55125
(415) 604-4333
Mergers and Acquisitions of Bowling Centers
[Website](#) [Email](#)



US BOWLING

Gus Falgien

5480 Schaefer Ave, Chino, CA 91710
C: 818-613-5633
Full line supplier of bowling center capital equipment
[Website](#) [Email](#)



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