

Reggie Rich Tribute Fund tops \$7,200

Four area leagues pledge “50/50” support

By Alden “Andy” Anderson

As noted in the May/June issue, longtime area bowler Reginald “Reggie” Rich died in a car accident on the way home from his Monday league’s final night of bowling the evening of May 8, 2017. Reggie was a very special person, large in stature at six-foot-three and 260 pounds, a kind-hearted, generous man, always smiling—truly a “gentle giant.”

Anyone who knew him, knew Reggie loved children. One Wednesday night as he waited



Sophie Swenton first met Reggie Rich at age 2½.

for his league to start, Reggie watched as balloons were handed out to children as a birthday party was winding down. There were a few balloons left over. Reggie noticed that a bystander, 2½-year-old Sophie Swenton, also was watching. When she wasn’t offered one of the extra balloons, Reggie could see how disappointed she was. The next Wednesday, he brought a fistful of balloons to the bowling center and gave them to a very happy and appreciative Sophie—a typical Reggie move. Over the next 5½ years, it was great to observe the wonderful, special friendship between Sophie and Reggie. Several weeks before Reggie passed away, Sophie had given her friend,

a beaming “Mr. Reggie,” her first-grade school picture.

After Reggie’s passing, the Reggie Rich Tribute Fund (<https://www.gofundme.com/reggie-rich-tribute-fund>) was established to honor his memory. As a fitting tribute to Reggie’s love of bowling, his generosity, and his love of children, the proceeds from the fund will be used to pay the league fees of area youth bowlers who could not otherwise afford to bowl in a youth league. The program will be administered through the youth leagues at Bowl America Falls Church. To date, donations total over \$7,200.

With fall leagues now forming, efforts are underway to secure future donations that will continue to be used to support the youth leagues at Bowl America Falls Church. So far, the first four leagues approached—Club 55, First Niters, Falls Church Commercial, and Senior Mixed Gray—have included provisions in their 2017-2018 bylaws to donate the league portion of their “50/50” proceeds, estimated in excess of \$2,000, to Reggie’s tribute fund. What a great way to honor Reggie’s legacy.

But then, it also strikes me as a great potential investment in the future of bowling. What does your league do with its 50/50 money? Why not donate it as a means to grow your bowling center’s youth programs? After all, today’s youth are the key to the future of our sport.

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