

Nation's Capital Area Bowling Association

Chartered By The AMERICAN BOWLING CONGRESS November 29, 1945
AFFILIATED WITH THE VIRGINIA STATE BOWLING ASSOCIATION

Thirty years ago, on November 29, 1945 an event took place which should be noted. That was the day the Washington City Tenpin Bowling Association was officially instituted.

This appears to be a rather routine matter when you read the statement above, however reviewing the minutes of the meetings preceding and immediately following that date it becomes apparent that it is far from routine, and that it took some dedicated and far-seeing men to do the ground work that brought the Association into being.

It actually began a year earlier in November 1944 when Mr. Arthur Stellmacher began visiting bowling alleys, talking to tenpin bowlers and collecting names and addresses, then inviting them to a meeting held in March 1945. There were 66 men at the meeting. Mr. Vance ABC Representative from New York explained the ABC program and suggested some key men be appointed to contact management to persuade them to refurbish their alleys to meet conditions which could be certified.

This was easier said than done. Management felt that the tenpin game would never succeed in this area; however Mr. Arthur Stellmacher and Mr. Matthew Bennie were not the type to be easily

discouraged. Finally Mr. Berger of the Arcadia Bowling Center, 3134 - 14th Street, NW agreed to listen. On May 31, 1945 a meeting was held at Mr. Berger's office in the Chevy Chase Ice Palace. After the advantages of league bowling and nationally recognized alley specifications were explained, Mr. Berger agreed to refinish the Arcadia Center — provided the "pioneers" would have an organized group and could control them. The first officers were elected at this meeting: president, Matt Bennie; secretary, Art Stellmacher; treasurer, Joe Brannon.

On June 15, 1945 a meeting was held at the Arcadia Center for the purpose of forming an association to affiliate with the American Bowling Congress. The officers elected at the May meeting were affirmed and in addition Jim Stack and George Seeley were elected first and second vice presidents; and Bill Zier, Frank Smothers, Gilbert Evans and Billy Rapp were elected directors.

Finally, on November 29 it was officially announced that the American Bowling Congress had accepted the application for a charter and the Washington City Tenpin Bowling Association was officially born. Membership was three leagues: 2 men's and 1 mixed. Subsequently

The **President's Message**



Vernon R. Burke

the first City Tournament was held with 10 teams, 26 doubles and 52 singles.

Mr. Elmer Baumgarten, then ABC Secretary, proved prophetic when he expressed his belief that this Association would grow into one of the finest in the country.

To those mentioned above and others who were in at the small beginning of this Association, we should all be grateful as it has grown into the 10th largest association in this country. Let's don't forget our founders and continue to build on their foundations for the next thirty years, as we have during the past thirty.

