

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

A Focus On Achievement Makes End-Of-Season Banquet Something To Remember

"I have been competitively bowling in leagues since my college days in the '70s," says Cecilia Ford, Secretary/Treasurer and Co-Founder of Washington, D.C.-based League of Women Bowlers. "But I have never received anything like this from a league banquet."

"At typical banquets you receive your prize fund, maybe a meal and good conversation ... but not certificates, awards, etc. Nowadays it's only a 'show-me-the-money' type of presence."

Not so with the banquet coordinated by Ford. To make her first banquet with her newly formed league something extra special, she went the extra mile, and it clearly paid off.

For her banquet, Ford was able to draw on her experience as an athletic director. "We always had an awards banquet for the students," Ford said. "And things like videos and pictures were par for the course."

"So for the Women's League we made colored bowling pins with the league name, the bowler's name and the year. It was a fabulous success!"

In addition to the custom pins, Ford's league players were presented with personalized photo award certificates, team certificates with team pictures, individual achievement certificates with action shots of the



bowlers, and appreciation certificates with close-up shots of the bowlers.

But it didn't end there. "I obtained donations from organizations, businesses, friends, family, etc., and raffled them off to the members by pulling their names from a hat," Ford said. "Invited guests and league supporters were also awarded photo certificates (with pictures taken of their visits during league play) and were eligible to win donated prizes through a ticket raffle."

And Ford's personal touch did not go unappreciated. "One of my fondest, most precious memories of the banquet presentation will forever be people's response when I offered to distribute the cash awards first. Their unified response was, 'Oh no, no, no. We want our awards first. The money can wait!'"

Asked what she thinks made her banquet such a smashing success, Ford is unequivocal. "The players appreciate personal recognition of their achievements. It's great for league morale and team spirit."

"It's definitely bringing them back next year, as well as working wonders for recruiting new members who also want to receive the accolades and awards, and join in the fun."



Among the many personalized awards given at the banquet were colored bowling pins with the league name, the bowler's name and the year.

IS YOUR LEAGUE SPECIAL?

US Bowler's "League Secretaries" special section is all about exchanging ideas and addressing problems league secretaries face. Your input is not only welcome, but encouraged. If your league is special – if you provide unusual prizes, have a novel solution to end-of-season roll-offs or have unique rules to address a problem, we'd love to hear from you. Send your comments via email to: usbowler@bowl.com. Include "League Secretaries Forum" in the subject line.