

For Immediate Release (January 23, 2024)

BPAA TO HONOR AL BLOUGH WITH VICTOR LERNER MEMORIAL MEDAL

ARLINGTON, Texas — The Bowling Proprietors' Association of America (BPAA) is proud to announce the recipients of the 2024 Bowling Industry Service Awards, the most prestigious awards presented by the association.

Al Blough has been selected as the 2024 BPAA Hall of Fame inductee and recipient of the Victor Lerner Memorial Medal. The Lerner Medal is the highest honor awarded by the BPAA and recognizes an individual for a lifetime of service to the bowling industry. It represents the recipient's induction into the BPAA Hall of Fame, which is housed at the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame in Arlington.

Blough served on the BPAA Board of Directors and the association's League Development Committee, and was honored with the V.A. Wapensky Award in 2018. He spent more than 60 years in the industry and taught thousands of people to love the game of bowling. Blough operated three successful centers even during times when bowling in the United States was in decline, focusing on league play and children's programs as well as constantly reinvesting in facility modernization.

Keith Hamilton will receive the V.A. Wapensky Award, named after BPAA's long-time executive director, "Chief" Wapensky. Hamilton served as chairman of the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame and currently serves on the BVL Board of Directors after nearly 30 years in publishing as co-owner of Luby Publishing Inc.

Steve Wiemer was named Proprietor of the Year. He owns and operates Enterprise Park Lanes and Sunshine Lanes in Springfield, Missouri. A key to his success is the relationships he develops with his staff and customers, who find his centers great places to work and get together. He also operates a long-running, multi-weekend tournament that attracts entries from 14 states.

Brian Borowski was selected by BPAA President Kevin Krauss for the President's Award. Krauss recognized Borowski for his exceptional service as BPAA's treasurer over the last six years.

Verity Crawley will be recognized with the Dick Weber Bowling Ambassador Award, named after the legendary bowling icon. Crawley is being honored for her many contributions to the game and the sport of bowling, both on and off the lanes.

Joe LaSpina will receive the Ruben A. Dankoff Award for Public Policy and Legislative Service for his relentless advocacy work to help proprietors in New York and other state association legislative representatives develop their state programs.

Amleto Monacelli will receive the 2024 Media Award. Monacelli is being recognized for his “Tip Tuesday” video short series on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube that provides viewers with all kinds of helpful bowling tips.

The Greater Tampa USBC Association will be recognized at the USBC Convention with the BPAA USBC Association Award, which is presented to a local USBC association that has demonstrated a high degree of support and cooperation with its local BPAA proprietor group.

Krauss, who also serves as BPAA’s Awards Committee chairman, said, “If you want to visit with some truly interesting and inspirational people who are passionate about our sport, look no further than this year’s group of award recipients. We are honored to present these individuals with this year’s industry service awards and thank them for sharing their love of bowling with others.”

The Bowling Industry Service Awards will be presented at BPAA’s Annual Awards Brunch on Tuesday, July 2, during International Bowl Expo 2024 at the Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center in Denver. The Victor Lerner Medal presentation will take place during the Expo’s general session on Monday, July 1.

About BPAA

Founded in 1932, the mission of the Bowling Proprietors’ Association of America (BPAA) is to enhance the profitability of its members. Headquartered in Arlington, Texas, at the International Bowling Campus, the BPAA offers its more than 3,300 member centers group purchasing programs, business and educational seminars, and legislative representation, and also promotes bowling. For additional information, please visit www.bpaa.com or call 800-343-1329.