

## **Don L. Thompson, Jr.**

Don began bowling while stationed at the University of Oklahoma. Don and his wife Sharon started bowling with friends, not in a league but in a more laid back style. They learned to bowl while bowling for Green Stamp. After a move to California, Don started taking bowling seriously as he joined his squadron's bowling team. When the family was uprooted and moved to Omaha, NE, Don continued bowling and instilled the love of bowling in his two children Ron and Treva. Don began coaching youth bowling when his children joined a league. Once again the Air Force decided it was time for the Thompson's to hit the road, this time they landed at Kirtland AFB. Don continued bowling on his squadron's team and coaching the youth on base.

Don Thompson is the ultimate volunteer to the sport of bowling. He has been involved with youth bowling for the past 20 years in a variety of capacities. Throughout the entire 20 years he has been a coach, ultimately getting his Silver certification to better help youth bowlers. He took the youth program at Kirtland Air Force Base and doubled the number of bowlers. After taking over the Holiday Youth program five years ago, he did the same thing there. Don has also represented the youth program at the board level for 10 years, making sure that the children's best interests were being represented. His most recent volunteer project has been running and coaching the high school bowling team at Eldorado High School. He was instrumental in getting the school to approve this new activity.

In addition to working with youth bowlers, Don has taken on the responsibility of league president in several leagues. He was instrumental in helping to make a smooth transition from ABC/WIBC to one USBC organization at the local level. He has been the 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president of the Central New Mexico USBC board since its inception 4 years ago and is a member of the state USBC board. He is an active member of these boards, volunteering numerous extra hours of his own time whenever necessary. Don has vast computer knowledge and expertise that he unselfishly shares with the CNMUSBC board. He was instrumental in establishing the local association's website and remains active in its ongoing maintenance and improvement. Don spearheaded the establishment of the local youth committee and has served as its chair for the past two years and was responsible for establishing, maintaining and updating the committee's policies and procedures.

When Don is not bowling in local or state tournaments, you can often find him volunteering his time to work them. He even travels out of state to participate in an annual military bowling tournament. In addition to bowling in and volunteering at tournaments, he started an annual youth/adult

tournament held in Albuquerque. This is one of the few tournaments of this type. Don discovered the Isotopes allow non-profit organizations to work concessions stands during home games and set-up a group to earn money for the adult/youth tournament which gives out over \$2000 yearly. This group also allows parents to work the games and earn money allowing their children the opportunity they might not otherwise have to bowl not only in leagues but local and national championship tournaments.

In May, Don was elected to the President position of the newly formed New Mexico High School Bowling Association (NMHSBA). Don has been instrumental in developing a policy and procedures manual for the NMHSBA.

Don Thompson is the ultimate volunteer. He helps bowlers of all ages in whatever capacity he can. Many times you can find him out on the lanes giving bowling tips to interested bowlers, both youth and adult. His knowledge of bowling and bowling rules and regulations is always impressive. Whenever someone wants to know something about a bowling rule, they ask Don. If he doesn't know the answer, he will find it. He is a stickler for doing things the right way. I cannot imagine another person more deserving of induction for meritorious service.