

## **TBCA Membership Letter**

February 16, 2010

Nearly 24 years ago, I got into the bowling business after spending 20 years in the U.S. Army. At that time, I didn't know I was going from the frying pan into the fire. I didn't think it was possible to spend more time in the office of a commercial enterprise than protecting Uncle Sam. Obviously, I wasn't too smart in those days.

I do know, however, that I was smart enough that even before the center was built, I had already joined the BPAA and its state organization, the Texas Bowling Centers Association. I still remember driving to Austin and walking into the TBCA office announcing that I was building a center in Killeen and wanted to join. And I still remember the looks on the faces of the office staff that said, "This is the easiest new member we've gotten in a long time".

Being in a relatively small city and not having been in the bowling business previously, I figured I needed all the help I could get. And I knew long before I opened the center that membership in the business I chose for a second career could only benefit me. Looking back over the past 24 years, I have never regretted that decision. I know that if I took the time to track the revenue generated from being a member, it would far exceed the \$58 per lane bed that I pay annually.

I have heard that "back in the good old days", you only had to open the doors and the customers would flock to you to ring your cash register. Now, having been a proprietor, I know that's not the case. You have to promote your business and show the potential customers why they should bowl instead of golfing, going to movies, or just sitting at home watching their DVDs. And I've found that my BPAA/TBCA membership gives me all kinds of ideas to build my revenue.

I could make this a long letter extolling the benefits of membership in our trade organization. But I'm sure you've seen the membership packets and information available to you. Please feel free to call me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Dick Atkinson  
Hallmark Lanes, Killeen