

Nelson L. Ray Sr.

Meritorious Service



Nelson L. Ray Sr. (Nels as he is most often called) started his bowling career in 1962, at the old Bowl American Dundalk lanes. He very soon became interested in the administrative side of bowling. His ability to interpret rules made him a valuable asset at league meetings. Nels began his tenure with the Maryland State Bowling Association in 1974 as delegate. His knowledge of parliamentary procedure kept the meetings running smoothly. He has held the positions of vice president, director, and delegate. In 1981, he was appointed Parliamentarian by then president

Bill Pope. He still holds this position on the state board. Nels has attended every spring meeting and all but one fall meeting of the Maryland State Board of Directors, and Council of Delegates since 1974. The one meeting he missed was due to his being in the hospital recovering from a stroke. Nels has participated in every state tournament since 1963.

Nels was instrumental in the creation and structure of both the Maryland State Bowling Association Manual of Procedure and the MSBA Tournament Manual of Procedure. He played a significant role in the formation of the Maryland State Bowling Association Hall of Fame, and still served on the Hall of Fame Committee, representing the GBBA. Nelson has been the Tournament Director the last four times the state tournament has been hosted by the Greater Baltimore Bowling Association. Each tournament was professionally conducted and provided the MSBA with substantial funds from the tournament expenses.

Nels served the GBBA as director of Fair Lanes Dundalk from 1974 to 1981. In 1981, he was elected Executive Vice President. He held this position until he left the board in 1996. During his years as the Executive Vice President, Nels was instrumental in the associations acquisition of its first computer. He spent many hours setting up the computer and arranging for the key punching necessary to make the venture successful. Nels even spent his vacation printing the year book. He trained the secretary and the office clerk on the basics of using the computer, typing bowler's data and retrieving the necessary reports for ABC's use. He was the tournament director of the City Championships for five years. He was the first to use a computer to keep track of scores and print the winner's checks and final reports. Nels attended twenty-four ABC

Annual Meetings as a delegate. He has participated in twenty-one national tournaments. He has a lifetime average in the ABC Tournaments of 186, with a high series of 668.

Along with his volunteer work for the MSBA and the GBBA, Nels has been a pretty good bowler as well. He has a high series of 793, and a high game of 299. The highest average he attained was 195. Although he has not won any titles in the MSBA or the GBBA Championship Tournaments, he has done very well in the James E. Morell Sr. Seniors Tournaments. He won the first three tournaments in his age group. Nels has also done very well in the GBBA and CHCBA 700 Club tournaments. He may not have won any of the tournaments, but he bowled well enough at times to be considered a factor in their outcome. Nels also is a Certified USA Bowling Bronze Level Coach. He willingly aids those who request help in their game. His reward is seeing the bowler's progress.

Nelson L. Ray Sr. is a widower; he was married to Terry Ray for 41 years. He has two children, Cynthia Ann and Nelson Jr. and four grandchildren. Nelson was educated in the public school system, having graduated from the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in the "A" course in 1950. Nelson began employment at the C&P Telephone Company in March 1951. He entered the military service in 1952 in the United States Army Signal Corps. While in the Army, Nelson was able to attend the University of Maryland for two years, studying parliamentary law. Upon his discharge from the military Nelson returned to his position at the Telephone Company. He retired from Bell Atlantic in December 1991, after 40 years of service.

Nelson L. Ray, Sr. has demonstrated a sustained high level of service for a period covering more than 29 years. It is through this service on both the State and Local levels, and his dedication and love for the game of American Tenpins that the Maryland State Bowling Association proudly inducts Nelson L. Ray, Sr. into its Hall of Fame in the Meritorious Service category.