

BCAW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

November, 2019

Jerry & Tami Polarek

Village Lanes

Green Bay, WI



The Village Lanes website states, "Village Lanes has been part of the Howard and Suamico communities for over 35 years. We take pride in our safe, family atmosphere." It's that community involvement that Jerry and Tami strive for especially the kids. As a matter of fact they are in the process of organizing a tournament to benefit local kids in need. As soon as the community heard what Jerry and Tami were doing, the Howard Fire Department, first responders and law enforcement wanted to become involved. That is what community does and that is why I wanted to find out more about this bowling center.

Please give a bit of history of how you started in the bowling industry.

Before bowling, I had run a restaurant and a bakery. Tami's parents owned Village Lanes since she was 18. I had met Tami when I applied for the high school bowling coach position. Then I became a pinsetter, even went to Brunswick School to become the mechanic. Later, Tami and her Aunt had bought the bowling center from her parents. And the rest, as they say, is history. I've been in the bowling business for 21 years.

What is the best advice you ever received?

Stay positive. With the ups and downs in the bowling business and in life – you have to be.

What is your favorite moment of bowling so far?

Being inducted into the Green Bay Bowling Hall of Fame in 2017 and serving on the Wisconsin State Youth Bowling Board for many years.

What are you most proud of in bowling?

Watching the kids in the junior bowling programs become young adults and attend college. We had about 8 – 10 bowlers attend college on a bowling scholarship. I'm also very proud of Tami for going from daycare provider to recently being named Woman of Distinction from Trademark Publishing for her years in bowling and working with youth.

How has bowling evolved since you started?

There is more talent in bowling these days. Watching the way they throw the ball, hold the ball in the proper way, how they dress and conduct themselves. They are more mature and in turn have improved the game largely themselves.

Just because it's football season and the bowling center is in the shadow of Lambeau Field, I had to ask if they have had any Green Bay Packer players bowling at the center. Apparently they do. From Brett Favre to Aaron Rodgers and other players have cleaned up the strikes (or tried to). According to Jerry, locals treat them with Midwestern hospitality and pretty much leave them alone to give them privacy.

Jeff Moore said, "the most important thing you will ever wear is your attitude." Stay positive Jerry.