

# KARL KIELICH

## ADMINISTRATION/COACHING



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## Karl Kielich

### El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame Nominee

#### Coaching/Administrative Category

Karl Kielich is currently serving as President of the largest National Governing Body under the United States Olympic Committee, the United States Bowling Congress (USBC). His more than 24 years of volunteer service both at the local level and his continuing service nationally on the USBC Board of Directors helps shape the future of the entire bowling industry. This includes the rules and regulations for not just competition within the United States, but for competition throughout the world where USBC is recognized as the international benchmark for governing bodies throughout the world. Kielich is the only El Pasoan to have served in a national capacity for the sport of bowling.

On the local level, Kielich has served the bowlers of El Paso in a variety of leadership roles for the past 24 years. Throughout his service to the local bowlers he has added new and creative innovations that have enhanced the experience of those participating in bowling events including various tournaments and the El Paso Bowling Hall of Fame banquets.

A testament to Kielich's leadership and commitment to serve, he has also served on the Board of Directors for Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL). BVL is the only national sports organization charity devoted exclusively to serving America's veterans and active duty personnel. BVL's annual contributions of over \$1M and over \$50M through the years provide recreational and therapeutic services to America's heroes. He also serves as a director on the Bowling Proprietor's Association of America Board of Directors, which is the trade association supporting bowling center operators throughout the United States.

Kielich's greatest accomplishments for the El Paso community were his involvement with the 2010 USBC Women's Championships and the 2015 USBC Open Championships. These annual tournaments are the largest participatory sporting events in the United States with over 45k participants annually. He played an important support role to USBC in 2010 in helping secure staffing and other logistics for the tournament and was an integral part of the team that helped secure the successful bid to host the 2015 Open Championships. These two events brought over 100,000 visitors to El Paso with an economic impact to the El Paso community that exceeded \$110M. During these two events, Kielich also organized and managed the two largest scholarship bowling tournaments in El Paso's history where over 400 youth bowlers from El Paso, New Mexico, Arizona and Northern Mexico participated. In excess of \$21,000 in scholarships were awarded to the participants of these two tournaments.

Kielich has been, and continues to be, a successful athlete within the El Paso bowling community. He is one of only four El Paso residents to have won a Professional Bowlers Association tournament and currently has won 36 city championship titles (17 consecutive years with at least one city championship title). He is the owner of 26 – 300 games and 9 – 800 series through his career. While being an active athlete, he volunteers over 300 hours in support and administration of the sport of bowling annually and has earned the Presidential Volunteer Service award every year since 2010.

## Karl Kielich - Biography

### **Personal Information:**

- Date of Birth: July 24, 1974
- Place of Birth: Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Marital Status: Married to Erika Kielich – 12 years
- Children: Kloey (12 years old)
- Resident of El Paso: 29 years

### **Administrative Accomplishments:**

- United States Bowling Congress Board of Directors (USBC)– The national governing body for the sport of bowling supporting over 1.4 million members – the largest National Governing Body member of the United States Olympic Committee:
  - President 2018 to present
  - Member of the Board of Directors: 2011-2013 & 2014 to present
  - Only El Paso resident to have served on the board of directors for bowling's national governing body
  - Part of the process that reformed the Professional Women's Bowling Association after being dormant for 14 years (reformed in 2014)
  - Served on the Legal & Legislative Committee, Awards Committee (Chair), Equipment & Specifications Committee, Executive Director Review Committee, Audit Committee, Diversity Committee, Nominating Committee (Chair), Association Outreach Committee (Chair), Women's Championship Task Force, Association Performance Standards Task Force, BPAA/USBC Joint Task Force.
- Professional Women's Bowling Association Hall of Fame Committee – (2018 to present)
- Appointed to the Board of Directors for Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL) (2016 to present). BVL is recognized as one of America's Top Charities, created by the bowling industry, to support recreational and therapeutic needs of America's veterans and active duty service women and men. Over \$50M raised through BVL's efforts with annual contributions of approximately \$1M.
- Bowling Proprietors Association of America (BPAA) – Trade association for bowling center operators in the United States
  - Director 2018 to Present
  - Serves on the League Development Committee
- El Paso Chapters of USBC and its predecessors: (23 Years)
  - Director: 1994 -1996 & 1998 – 2008
  - Vice President: 2008 – 2009
  - President: 2009 – 2014
  - Association Manager: 2014 - 2017

- Member of the El Paso Convention & Visitors Bureau's (Destination El Paso) bid team for the 2015 USBC Open Championship that was awarded to El Paso.
- Creator, Organizer and Tournament Director for USBC Women's Championships Youth Kick Off (2010) and the USBC Open Championships Youth Kick Off (2015) tournaments. - the largest scholarship bowling tournaments in El Paso history
  - Over \$21,000 in scholarships were awarded to over 400 youth bowlers representing bowlers from West Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Northern Mexico.
  - Tournaments were conducted on USBC Championships lanes constructed inside the El Paso Convention Center
- USBC Certified Coach – Bronze Certification (one of three active certified coaches in El Paso certified as Bronze level or higher)
- Tournament Director for six annual championship tournaments where over \$30,000 in prizes are awarded annually to El Paso and area athletes
  - El Paso Scratch Classic bowling tournament (2005-2018)
    - El Paso's premier individual championship event
    - Assistant Tournament Director 2001 – 2004
    - Secured local television coverage of tournament finals during 2004 – 2006 on Time Warner Cable
  - El Paso Handicap Shoot-out Tournament (2007-2018)
    - Individual handicap championship event
  - El Paso Open Championships (2014-2018)
    - Annual mixed tournament with over 300 participants.
  - El Paso Women's Championships (2014-2018)
    - Annual women's tournament with over 150 participants
  - El Paso Men's Championships (2014-2018)
    - Annual men's tournament with over 250 participants
  - El Paso Youth Championships (2014-2018)
    - Annual Youth and Special Olympic tournament with over 80 participants
- El Paso USBC representative to the USBC Annual Meeting and Texas USBC Annual Meeting on several occasions
- Presidential Volunteer Service Award recipient: 2010 – 2018. Over 300 hours of volunteerism annually in support of bowling
- Member of the Professional Bowlers Association: 1996 - 2010

## Accomplishments and Awards as an athlete:

- Professional Bowlers Association:
  - PBA Regional Champion: 2000 – Topeka, Kansas (4<sup>th</sup> El Paso resident with a PBA title: Roy Lown, Skee Foremsky and Phil Prieto)
  - PBA Regional runner up: 2002 – Big Spring, Texas
  
- El Paso Bowling Hall of Fame Inductee in 2008 (Youngest to be inducted-34 Years Old)
- El Paso Bowler of the Year 2015-2016, 2017-2018
- El Paso USBC High Average in 2017-2018
- El Paso Scratch Classic Champion in 2008
- El Paso City Champion (Scratch All-Events) in 2006, 2007, 2015, 2018
- 36 City Championship Titles earned (City Record):
  - 21 Team Titles
  - 9 Doubles Titles
  - 2 Singles Title
  - 4 All-Events Titles
  - Has won at least one city tournament title each year from 2002 through 2018 (City Record 17 consecutive years)
- Set Team Five Person Single Game Record in 2017 – 1380 Game – Highest single game score in the United States for the 2017-2018 bowling season
- 15 Bi-National Friendship Bowling Association Division 1 Singles Titles (international competition)
- Lane #1 (Ball manufacturer) – Professional Staff Member 1999 – 2005
- Vise Inserts (Bowling accessory manufacturer) – Staff Member – 1999 to present
- 300 Games
  - 26 - Career 300 Games
  - 3 – 300 Games in PBA competition
- 800 Series (Highest of 836)
  - 9 – Career 800 Series
  - 2 – 800 Series in PBA Competition



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**Our Vision**

To be the leading authority  
to the sport, servicing the  
needs of bowling.

**A Future FOR  
THE Sport.**

United States Bowling Congress

**Feb. 10, 2017**

To El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame,

I would like to submit my endorsement for the nomination of Karl Kielich to the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame.

Karl has served the El Paso bowling community for many years on the local and national level, and his efforts have greatly benefitted not only the sport of bowling, but the city of El Paso, as well.

Karl currently is completing his second three-year term on the national board of directors of the United States Bowling Congress. Since 2011, he has played important leadership roles in our organization by serving on the Legal and Legislative, Nominating, and National Policy committees. He also has served on the International Bowling Campus Joint Strategic Planning Task Force and the Diversity and Inclusion Committees.

His impact in the El Paso bowling community has been tremendous, as he has served on the local association board 20 years, including five years as president. During his time as president, he was instrumental in bringing the USBC Women's Championships, a 100-day national bowling tournament, to El Paso.

The great experience of the Women's Championships led USBC to select El Paso as host for the 2015 USBC Open Championships, which featured 128 consecutive days of competition that drew nearly 60,000 bowlers and guests to Sun City. The two events had a significant, positive economic impact on the city.

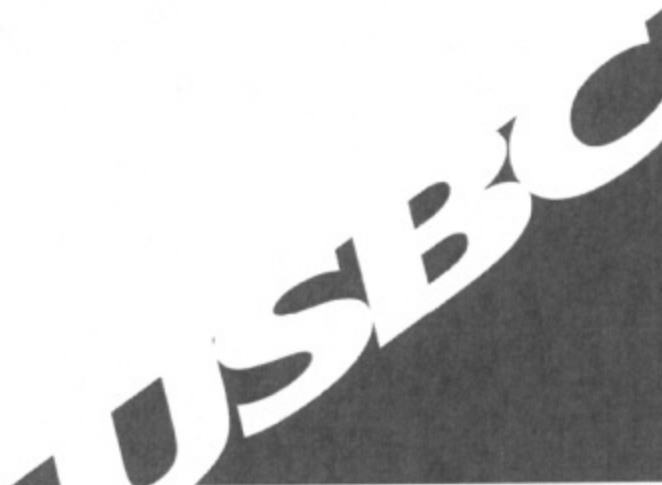
He also serves as a director on the Bowlers to Veterans Link, a national nonprofit charity that supports America's veteran and active duty service men and women. Founded in 1942, BVL is the sport's most successful charity, raising almost \$50 million dollars, and is America's only national sports organization specifically devoted to those who have served our country.

Karl was recognized for his work with selection to the El Paso Bowling Hall of Fame in 2008, and would be an outstanding selection to the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Chad Murphy,  
USBC Executive Director





February 12, 2017

To: Nominating Committee  
El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame

Dear Sirs,

Please accept this letter as my expressed recommendation and support of Karl Kielich for induction into the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame.

I have had the distinct pleasure and honor to serve alongside Karl on the El Paso USBC board of directors for over 25 years and during that time, I found him to be a dedicated and hardworking member of our team. Furthermore, as a member of the national USBC board of directors, his knowledge and experience on the national stage has been an invaluable resource and brought additional respect and recognition to our local board. Additionally, Karl was instrumental in bringing the United States Bowling Congress Open Championships tournament to our city in 2015. He worked tirelessly and was totally committed to bridging the gap between the City leaders, the USBC development staff and our local association by anticipating potential difficulties and providing creative and efficient solutions which, in turn paved the way for a successful tournament that brought countless new visitors and substantial tourist dollars to El Paso.

In addition to his duties on the national and local boards, Karl was recently named to the Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL) board of directors, a position that is very near and dear to Karl's heart. The BVL is non-profit organization that provides support to our veterans through bowling.





Karl's vision and love for the sport of bowling has been and continues to be a vital asset to our organization. Whether serving as a director, board president, association manager, national board member, tournament director or coach, Karl has always given his all to the sport of bowling and has represented himself with integrity, trustworthiness and fairness. He would be a welcome addition and is much deserving of being in the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame.

Regards,

Adolph Pugh  
President, El Paso USBC



February 6, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Destination El Paso, it is my distinct pleasure to endorse the nomination of Mr. Karl Kielich, Association Manager for the local USBC who serves on the National USBC Board of Directors, for induction into the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame.

A longtime friend of our organization, I first had the opportunity to work with Karl in 2010 when Destination El Paso bid to host the 2015 United States Bowling Congress Open Championships. Karl was instrumental in helping our organization sort out all of the necessary specifics and assisted in construction of our formal proposal to the USBC. His guidance and support ultimately helped El Paso secure the event, which we are preparing to host in less than 30 days.

The 2010 USBC Women's Championships were the first arena-style women's championship in the organization's history and welcomed more than 40,000 bowlers and guests, providing a boost to the economy to the tune of \$42 million. Almost one year after the conclusion of this event, we received word that El Paso had been selected to host the 2015 USBC Open Championships, which will mark the first time in a decade that the event will travel to a brand new host city. Over 50,000 bowlers and guests will flock to El Paso over the course of 128 days and will generate an estimated economic impact over \$70 million.

These two events represent the largest participatory sporting events in the world and the impact they have on our community is unprecedented. I can confidently say that Karl's dedication, vision and leadership played a major role in El Paso's host selection. The aforementioned accomplishments are why I personally feel that Karl Kielich should be inducted into the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame and I hope you'll recognize his contributions to our sports community.

Sincerely,

Bryan Crowe  
General Manager  
Destination El Paso

## Kielich elected USBC president, Jost selected as vice president

Terry Bigham

April 27, 2018



**ARLINGTON, Texas** – The United States Bowling Congress Board of Directors have elected Karl Kielich of El Paso, Texas, to serve as USBC president and Karen Jost of Tumwater, Washington, as vice president starting with the 2018-2019 season.

Kielich will take the reins from Frank Wilkinson of Staten Island, New York, while Jost assumes the role held by Cathy DeSocio of Wichita, Kansas. Both Wilkinson and DeSocio are closing their final terms as president and vice president, respectively, having reached term limits.

Wilkinson will remain a director through the 2018-2019 season while DeSocio has two seasons remaining on her current three-year term as a director.

Kielich was elected to a third term by delegates at the 2017 USBC Annual Meeting.

“I’m am honored for the opportunity and appreciate the support and trust my fellow board members have shown by selecting me,” Kielich said. “I want to thank Frank for his leadership these last three years and I look forward to working with Karen, the board and USBC staff as we continue USBC’s focus on being an effective national governing body and providing quality service to our membership.”

He currently is on the Nominating Committee (chair), the Equipment Specifications Committee, and Executive Director and Board Evaluation Committee, and serves on the Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL) board. He has

served on the Audit, Awards and Recognition (chair), Legal and Legislative, and National Policy committees. He also has been on the Women's Championships task force, Performance Standards task force, and IBC Joint Strategic Planning task force.

Kielich, an El Paso USBC Hall of Fame member, served as president for El Paso USBC for five years and was involved in the local promotion of the 2010 USBC Women's and 2015 USBC Open Championships in El Paso. He is a Lead Financial Systems Analyst for AT&T.

Jost begins her third term with the 2018-2019 season after delegates re-elected her during Thursday's Annual Meeting.

Jost has served on the Nominating, Strategic Planning, Executive Director and Board Evaluation, Association Outreach, and Awards and Recognition committees. She also serves on the BVL board. She has continued to serve as a volunteer leader at local, state and national levels, and was inducted into the South Sound USBC Hall of Fame in 2012.

She holds a bachelor's degree in biology (minor in physical education), a master's in physical therapy and is a licensed physical therapist. She currently works as a Health Services Analysis Program Manager at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries.

Kielich and Jost will assume their new roles on Aug. 1, 2018.

Visit [BOWL.com/About](http://BOWL.com/About) to learn more about the USBC Board of Directors.

<https://bowl.com/News/NewsDetails.aspx?id=23622331049>

## USBC fills vacant board position

Terry Bigham

USBC Communications

Published: July 29, 2011 | [Bowl.com](http://www.bowl.com)

Karl Kielich of El Paso, Texas, has been appointed to the United States Bowling Congress Board of Directors, USBC president Darlene Baker announced.

Kielich will fill the final two years of the board position held by Carolyn Dorin-Ballard. Dorin-Ballard resigned earlier this year after she was named USBC Director of Coaching Certification and Development.

Kielich, 37, currently is president of the El Paso USBC. He has been a member of the El Paso USBC/El Paso Bowling Association board for more than 14 years and was involved with the local promotion of the 2010 USBC Women's Championships in El Paso.

"Karl has not only good business but association experience, both of which are important for the USBC board," Baker said. "I'm looking forward to working with Karl and am sure he will be contributing from the start and will bring value to the board."

A finance manager for AT&T since 2005, Kielich also has enjoyed success on the lanes. He has a Professional Bowlers Association Southwest region title and more than 20 city titles in the El Paso USBC/El Paso BA along with several 300 games and 800 series. He was inducted into the El Paso USBC Hall of Fame in 2008.

<http://www.bowl.com/news/newsdetails.aspx?id=12884903469>

## 2014 USBC Convention comes to a close

Terry Bigham

USBC Communications

Published: April 25, 2014 | [Bowl.com](http://Bowl.com)

**RENO, Nev.** – Delegates elected four board members and decided eight legislative proposals on Friday, the final day of the 2014 United States Bowling Congress Convention and Annual Meeting.

Delegates took part in seminars, heard from industry leaders and saw the presentation of national awards during the USBC Convention that started Tuesday.

On Friday, the delegates heard from USBC President Andrew Cain and USBC Interim Executive Director Chad Murphy before voting on four open spots on the USBC board.

Current board members Jo Dimond of Columbus, Ohio, Marci Williams of Wichita, Kan., and Robert Spigner of Chicago were elected to the USBC Board of Directors and will be joined by Karl Kielich of El Paso, Texas, who served a two-year term on the board from 2011-2013. The board members will begin their three-year terms Aug. 1.

Each of the four board members elected Friday were selected on the first ballot. Six candidates, each slated by the USBC Nominating Committee, were on the ballot and a candidate needed a majority of the 825 eligible voting delegates for election.

Spigner led the voting with 564 votes followed by Williams (528), Dimond (506), Kielich (460), Jay Daryman (378) of York, Pa., and Brian Bulko (309) of El Paso, Texas.

Kelly Kulick of Union, N.J., recently was re-elected to a second term to the USBC Board by the Athletes Advisory Council. The athletes also elected Rhino Page of Dade City, Fla., to replace Tony Manna Jr., who is completing his third and final term. Board members are limited to three terms. Athletes who have been Team USA members in the past 10 years were eligible to vote to determine the athlete representatives to the board.

The 825 voting delegates (794 association delegates, eight athletes and 23 board members) voted on six proposals relating to USBC bylaws (two were withdrawn), one proposal relating to league rules, and one proposal related to tournament rules during the legislative session. USBC bylaws proposals required a two-thirds vote to pass while league rules and tournament rules required a majority vote.

Five proposals (one league rule, one tournament league rule and three USBC bylaws) were accepted and three proposals (USBC bylaws) were rejected. Please see below for the proposed amendments and the voting results.

USBC also showcased its significant financial support of charitable causes during Convention week.

USBC Bowl for the Cure received a late donation of \$25,000 from Barb Chrisman and Storm Products to reach its Your Roll to a Million goal set last year. The late contribution pushed the total donation to Susan G. Komen For The Cure over the \$1 million mark to \$1,000,427.09.

In 2014, USBC Bowl for the Cure eclipsed the \$10 million mark in total donations to Susan G. Komen For The Cure. Go to [BOWL.com/BFTC](http://BOWL.com/BFTC) for more information on Bowl for the Cure.

The Bowlers to Veterans Link, which raised more than \$823,000 for America's active-duty and veteran service men and women, recognized the top state and local associations for their contributions during the 2012-2013 season.

The top BVL state contributors for the season were California (\$129,766.33), Virginia (\$45,276.90) and Texas (\$39,928.71). For local associations, Citrus Belt USBC was the top contributor with \$23,026.57 followed by Minneapolis USBC with \$15,466.87 and Nation's Capital Area USBC with \$15,319. Go to [BOWL.com/Convention](http://BOWL.com/Convention) and click on the Committee reports for the 2014 BVL Report that has the top 50 state and local association contributors. Go to [BowlForVeterans.org](http://BowlForVeterans.org) for more information on BVL.

<http://www.bowl.com/News/NewsDetails.aspx?id=23622321649>

## 2017 USBC Convention concludes

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April 27, 2017



*Elected to the USBC Board of Directors on Thursday (from left): Adam Mitchell, Reston, Virginia; Karl Kielich, El Paso, Texas; Jo Dimond, Columbus, Ohio*

**LAS VEGAS** – Delegates voted on three board positions, watched presentations of national awards, and heard reports from United States Bowling Congress President Frank Wilkinson and USBC Executive Director Chad Murphy as the 2017 USBC Convention and Annual Meeting wrapped up Thursday at The Orleans.

Four candidates ran for the three open spots on the USBC Board. Incumbents Jo Dimond of Columbus, Ohio, and Karl Kielich of El Paso, Texas, were slated by the USBC Nominating Committee along with Glenda Beckett of Palmetto Bay, Florida, and Adam Mitchell of Reston, Virginia.

Kielich (617 votes), Mitchell (567), and Dimond (562) were elected on the first ballot. Beckett received 490 votes. The three elected each will begin a three-year board term starting Aug. 1, 2017.

Two athlete representatives were re-elected to USBC Board earlier this year. Kelly Kulick was selected for her third term, and Rhino Page to his second term, by Team USA athletes.



The International Bowling Campus Youth Committee will have two new members as John McCarthy III of Louisville, Kentucky, and Taffany Shipp of Pensacola, Florida, were selected to replace outgoing members Mike Hillman and Kim Stanek-Sims. IBC Youth Committee members were determined earlier this year and approved by the boards of the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America and USBC.

Delegates also decided 14 proposed amendments – two for league rules, seven proposals for tournament rules (one was withdrawn) and five bylaws proposals – during the Annual Meeting. Nine of the proposed amendments passed, including a proposal to allow leagues and tournament directors the option to cap a handicap game at 300 and to cap a handicap series at 900.

Other highlights from Convention week were the annual presentations by Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL) and Bowl for the Cure®.

- BVL provides recreational and therapeutic programs and services to brighten the days of America's active duty and veteran service men and women. Founded in 1942, it is the sport's oldest charity and has raised nearly \$50 million.

- BVL raised \$925,500 for the Department of Veterans Affairs thanks to contributions made during the 2015-2016 season. California was the top state association contributor with \$108,500, Metro Phoenix led local associations with a \$22,000 donation, and Stockton USBC was recognized as Best Small Local Association with an average contribution of \$9.28 per member. Go to [BowlForVeterans.org](http://BowlForVeterans.org) to learn more about BVL.

Bowl for the Cure®, a year-round fundraising initiative sponsored by USBC in partnership with Susan G. Komen®, presented a \$552,708 check to Susan G. Komen®, thanks to local and state association donations, along with merchandise sales and online donations. Go online to [BowlfortheCure.com](http://BowlfortheCure.com) to learn more.

Also during the week, USBC announced changes to lane inspections and a new designation to bridge the gap between Standard and Sport averages.

- USBC will implement new requirements for lane inspections for the 2018-2019 season and will adjust specifications for new installations for the 2019-2020 season based on recent research by the USBC Equipment Specifications and Certifications team.

- USBC also has established a new designation for leagues competing on lane conditions that fall between Standard and Sport conditions. A new Challenge lane condition designation and conversion chart was determined based on research of leagues, and starting with the 2017-2018 season, league secretaries must choose one, and only one, of three lane condition options – Standard, Challenge or Sport – when submitting its league certification.

Go to [BOWL.com](http://BOWL.com) to read more about the changes to lane inspections and the new Challenge lane condition designation.

<https://www.bowl.com/News/NewsDetails.aspx?id=23622329110>

## Opening ceremony kicks off anticipated USBC bowling tournament

by Krista Garvin

Saturday, March 7th 2015

EL PASO, Texas -- Bowlers finally got the chance to put the brand new 62-lane bowling alley to the test in downtown El Paso. The United States Bowling Congress Open Championship kicked off with an opening ceremony Saturday at the Judson F. Williams Convention Center.

"To have it here, and to be able to compete on our home turf, it's going to be amazing. The goose bumps were going to have walking down that center aisle are going to be tremendous," El Paso bowler Karl Kielich said.

Kielich is set to compete in this year's tournament with his team. As a part of the USBC local association, Kielich said he's been pushing for the tournament to come back to El Paso.

As KFOX14 reported, the Borderland played host to the USBC national women's bowling tournament in 2010.

USBC President Andrew Cain said his organization is impressed with the work crews did to transform the tournament venue in just a couple of months.

"This place it almost looks like it was built for this tournament. That was probably the most fantastic thing, the way the architecture flowed," Cain said.

Local entertainers wowed the crowd during Saturday's opening ceremony.

"If the energy carries on throughout the tournament that we saw in the opening ceremony, we might be in for one of the best tournaments in our 112 year history," Cain said.

While it could be a few years until the tournament comes back to El Paso in the future, the USBC said there is always a chance.

"We've got cities [planned] out through at least 2019, but we do go in a rotation. Every city has the opportunity to bid on this tournament, and that's how we came back to El Paso," Cain said.

The USBC said about 50 teams are currently in El Paso, and teams will continue to roll in. Teams are each expected to stay in El Paso for about five days over the course of the tournament.

<https://kfoxtv.com/news/local/opening-ceremony-kicks-off-anticipated-usbc-bowling-tournament>

## El Paso to host 2015 United States Bowling Congress Open Championships

By Aaron Bracamontes / El Paso Times

Posted: 09/10/2011 12:00:00 AM MDT

El Paso bowled another strike on Friday when it was announced that the United States Bowling Congress will bring the men's Open Championships to El Paso in 2015.

And with it, an expected \$75 million boost to the economy.

Bill Blaziek, general manager of the El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau, said he learned that El Paso won the bid on Thursday.

After working all night on finalizing the details, he made the announcement during a news conference Friday at the El Paso convention center.

"We told them, 'You come to El Paso and you're rock stars,' " Blaziek said. "We proved it with the women (in 2010), and we'll prove it again in 2015."

Brian Kennedy, president and CEO of the El Paso Sports Commission, said the return of the U.S. Bowling Congress is a result of El Pasoans working together.

"This is one (accomplishment) that this city did together," Kennedy said. "And I don't know if I have ever been more proud of our city."

The tournament is estimated to bring 65,000 bowlers, 35,000 guests and about \$75 million in economic impact over a 135-day period.

"I love bowling. It is the best ever," Kennedy said. "We have 100,000 reasons to love bowling."

Last year, the city hosted the 2010 U.S. Bowling Congress Women's Championship for the first time.

About 30,000 bowlers and an additional 10,000 spectators came to the city for the 100-day event.

The main beneficiaries of the bowlers' visits were restaurateurs, hotel operators and retailers.

The El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau estimated that bowlers, their friends and families spent \$42 million to \$48 million in El Paso and Southern New Mexico.

That is direct spending on lodging, food, shopping, entertainment and transportation.

The support that El Paso showed the bowlers is what made officials want to bring the tournament back, said Karl Kielich, local congress president.

"I haven't heard anyone say a bad thing about the women's tournament," Kielich said.

To lure the tournament back to El Paso, the Convention and Visitors Bureau launched its "El Paso Strikes Back" campaign, photographing El Pasoans with large piñata bowling pins.

The city also sent a video of several community members personally inviting the USBC back.

Both Blaziek and Kennedy are hopeful that this will encourage other major sporting events to come to El Paso, such as the return of the Conference USA basketball tournament.

The image of El Paso's safety also has received a boost with the return of the tournament.

"They spoke to all the women (from the 2010 tournament), and they all said it was safe," Kennedy said.

"I've actually been approached by national organizations saying they want to come to El Paso."

Aaron Bracamontes may be reached at [abracamontes@elpasotimes.com](mailto:abracamontes@elpasotimes.com); 546-6156.

[http://www.elpasotimes.com/ci\\_18861068?source=most\\_email](http://www.elpasotimes.com/ci_18861068?source=most_email)

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## THREE EVENTS GIVE EL PASO BOWLERS TASTE OF USBC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

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March 2, 2015



**EL PASO, Texas** - The El Paso Convention Center recently was transformed into a state-of-the-art bowling facility, and the special venue opened its doors for the first time this weekend, welcoming competitors for three special events.

The El Paso Convention Center, home of the upcoming 2015 United States Bowling Congress Open Championships, hosted the 2015 USBC Open Championships Youth and Special Olympics Kick-Off on Saturday and Sunday and provided the championship experience to El Paso's high school bowlers at the Price's Give 'Em Five High School Bowling City Championships on Sunday afternoon.

An event for the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) El Paso del Norte Region filled the house Monday night, using 52 of the 62 lanes.

The 2015 build features 52 lanes for Open Championships competition, 10 additional lanes for practice and a side event and spectator seating for hundreds of bowling fans.

The events gave El Pasoans the opportunity to experience the largest setup in USBC Open Championships history, which included the traditional march down the famed Center Aisle and the chance to see their names on the world's largest mobile scoreboard as they competed.

The Youth and Special Olympics Kick-Off had more than 250 entries, with bowlers competing in

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three handicap divisions in a three-game format. More than \$13,000 in scholarships were awarded during the event.

The High School Bowling City Championships featured 21 teams of four (two boys and two girls) representing nine local high schools. The event featured three games and was designed to introduce the students to the sport of

bowling, potentially securing their future in the sport.

"I have never bowled in a place like this," said Alejandro Dominguez, an 18-year-old junior who helped El Dorado High School No. 2 capture the team title. "There was some pressure, but it was an honor, and I'm proud to help my school take the top spot."



YWCA El Paso is the largest YWCA in the United States, and more than 175 people pre-registered for Monday's event.

"It's an outrageous opportunity to hold our very first bowling fundraiser in this venue," said Dr. Sandra Braham, Chief Executive Officer of YWCA El Paso. "This event (Open Championships) is so important to our city, and we're humbled and grateful to USBC for allowing us to hold our event here today."

The next scheduled event at the El Paso Convention Center is the Special Olympics National Unified Tournament, which will be held on the championship lanes March 4-5. The two-day event has been held in conjunction with the Open Championships every year since 1991.

Each year, nearly 400 Special Olympics athletes compete on bowling's biggest stage for gold, silver and bronze medals in team and doubles competition.

The 2015 Open Championships will welcome the first of more than 40,000 bowlers March 7. The tournament will run daily until July 12. The 2015 event marks the tournament's first visit to El Paso and fourth trip to the state of Texas.

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# 'Bigger than a Super Bowl'

Tourney brings 60,000 visitors, \$75M in spending

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Photo by David Crowder

## USBC tournament

Posted: Monday, July 13, 2015 10:08 am

By David Crowder El Paso Inc. staff writer | 0 comments

"A spectacular event for El Paso." That's how Rick LaFleur, president of the El Paso Hotel-Motel Association, describes the U.S. Bowling Congress Open Championships that wrap up this weekend at the Downtown convention center.

The tournament numbers look like this: \$75 million, 110,000 room nights, 40,000 bowlers and 7,300 teams over 127 days.

But they don't tell the full story. The tournament's impact will ripple across the country, bring in new events and improve El Paso's image, LaFleur and others say.

The city's hotels and motels were the greatest beneficiaries of a tournament that brought some 40,000 men and women bowlers and 20,000 spouses to El Paso for three- or four-day visits.

Destination El Paso greeted them with the largest



Liz Thurman of Goodyear, Arizona, celebrates after bowling a strike at the 62-lane bowling alley in the El Paso convention center. She and her team, Granybucks, took part in the 127-day U.S. Bowling Congress Open Championships.



constructed venue in the USBC Open's history, turning the civic center into a 62-lane bowling alley with shops, eateries and watering holes.

"It was fantastic that the El Paso Sports Commission, the county and the Convention and Visitors Bureau did this because it's a phenomenal piece of business," LaFleur said. "This is bigger than a Super Bowl."

And it came at just the right time, he said.

"This thing has saved our lunch," LaFleur said. "The hotel business is actually down 1.5 percent from last year – even with the bowling tournament."

"It's my understanding that bowling was putting people in 800 to 1,200 rooms a night out of the 9,000 rooms in El Paso, and that's almost a 10-percent increase in occupancy."

Hotel occupancy in El Paso hit 73 percent this May, compared with 70 percent in May 2014.

"Thank goodness for the bowlers; they helped us hold steady," said LaFleur, who's now concerned about the rest of the year.

El Paso hosted the USBC Women's Championships in 2010 and followed that up with a strong bid to capture this year's Open Championships.

And one success leads to another, said Bryan Crowe, general manager of Destination El Paso.

"Hosting the women's tournament in 2010 definitely helped us bring in Conference USA for the first time in 2011 and then bring them back in 2014," Crowe said. "That had a lot to do with our selection in '15."

"These things build our résumé, and they will lead to future successes for El Paso."

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But it was a risk.

"The city, county and the sports commission equally shared the site fee committed to USBC – \$1.6 million," Crowe said. "In addition, the city bore the additional costs of hosting the tournament itself."

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construction began in December until the takedown is completed this month. The city also took care of some of the marketing and building expenses and staffed the center without cost to the Bowling Congress.

"It's certainly an investment that has paid off for this community," Crowe said.

He said USBC used the \$1.6 million El Paso put up for the event to build the 62-lane bowling alley in the convention center.

All of the project's salvageable wood and other salvageable materials, except for the bowling lanes and ball-handling equipment, will be donated to Habitat for Humanity to help build local residences.

Destination El Paso and the USBC estimated that the bowlers, their spouses and friends would spend \$75 million to \$100 million in El Paso during the four-month tournament.

That will be measured, Crowe said, in coming calculation of taxes on hotel occupancy, car rentals, sales, mixed beverage sales and commercial revenue from sales of food and drink to the bowlers and their guests at the convention center.

In its 112-year history, the U.S. Bowling Conference had never brought its major annual event to El Paso, and it will probably be a long time before it comes back.

But for the past four months, bowlers in teams of five from around the country have come to El Paso at a rate of 400 to 500 a day, said USBC public relations manager Matt Cannizaro.

Most were men but many were women, including Luz Thurman of Goodyear, Arizona, who stood shorter, at 4'8", but bowled higher last Tuesday than the three other women and one guy on her Granybucks team.

Asked what they'd done in El Paso, she said, "We went to Walgreens to get beer."

Cannizaro said there were also 125 teams and more than 650 bowlers from El Paso in the tournament.

"Everything's been very smooth from the tournament aspect and from the El Paso side," he said. "It's definitely been one of our favorite cities to visit for its hospitality and friendliness.

"The unique part about our event is even though it's 127 days long, every day is opening day for hundreds of bowlers who come to town, and El Paso's been able to maintain that welcome feel the whole time, from March to July."

### Lots to do

Downtown El Paso has changed a lot since the women's championship five years ago, he said, and there's been much more for the bowlers to do, from baseball at the new ballpark next door to a bigger selection of restaurants and entertainment.

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The advertisement features a woman in a white shirt on the right side. The background is dark with white text and logos.

Scroggins, a three-time Southwest Region player of the year, finished fourth after losing to Kielich, while Henry Gonzalez moved up from third to second with a 221-214 win against Mark Scroggins, Mike's twin brother who finished fifth.

Tony Franklin jumped from fifth to third by beating Topeka native Chris Barnes 279-215 in the final match, leaving Barnes in sixth. Benoit, who was in contention until injuring his hand in the first game of the afternoon set, placed ninth, and Glass was 12th.

[http://cjonline.com/stories/121800/bow\\_pbaevent.shtml](http://cjonline.com/stories/121800/bow_pbaevent.shtml)

## 'Home' win proves elusive for Benoit, Barnes

Posted: Tuesday, December 19, 2000

By By STEVE THOMPSON

The Capital-Journal

At 1 o'clock Sunday afternoon, there was a good chance that a Topekan -- current or former -- would figure in the outcome of the Topeka PBA Southwest Region Open at West Ridge Lanes.

The 16-man field was about to begin its final eight games of match play, and two bowlers with Topeka ties and Professional Bowlers Association Tour credentials -- Bob Benoit and Chris Barnes -- were in second and fourth places, respectively.

Neither bowler had been lower than fourth place during the first 18 games of competition, and both were coming off solid eight-game sets Sunday morning. Benoit had averaged 234.88 and won six of eight matches; Barnes had gone 4-4 but averaged 236.75.

Would it be Benoit, the Topeka resident and former Tour standout, or Barnes, the Topeka native now living in Wichita and current Tour star, who would hoist the champion's trophy?

Neither, it turned out, would be a threat to 26-year-old Karl Kielich of El Paso, Texas, who won his first professional tournament and took home the \$3,000 first prize.

Benoit had barely started the afternoon session when his hopes were dashed by a cut on his right hand, the result of a chip near the thumb hole on the six-year-old ball he used for shooting spares. He averaged only 207.38 while winning just two of his last eight matches.

It was a bitter turn of events for the 46-year-old Benoit, who left the Tour three years ago to open a construction firm in Topeka.

"I'm pretty disappointed right now," Benoit said after finishing ninth and earning \$620. "I really think I could have won this tournament. I was bowling great. In practice (prior to the afternoon session) I was striking on every throw. Unfortunately this happened, and that was it."

Barnes' downfall wasn't due to injury. In fact, he was still in the hunt halfway through the final set, having won his first four matches with a 247.75 average. But the 30-year-old PBA Player of the Year candidate faltered down the stretch, averaging only 210.25 while losing his last four matches.

"I wouldn't call it an awe-inspiring performance," said Barnes, who finished sixth and collected \$730. "With four games to go I was still in pretty good shape; I just didn't make the right moves down the stretch. Of course, with the way Kielich bowled today, it may not have mattered."

• Paul Fleming of Bedford, Texas, could commiserate with Benoit and Barnes on Sunday. He entered the day in third place but withdrew during the eighth game of the morning session with a wrist injury. Rick Steelsmith of Wichita took Fleming's place and finished a respectable 14th, given the disadvantage that an alternate faces.

- Kielich, who more than tripled his bowling earnings with the victory, hopes to try his luck on the national tour someday. "The goal is to go out and butt heads with Chris Barnes more often," he said.

One of the first to congratulate Kielich after the win was his father, Robert. "He's been my strongest supporter from day one," Karl said. "He got me interested in the sport and spent a lot of money to get me here. I really have to thank him for this."

- There were two 300 games shot during the tournament. Kielich had the first one in the eighth game of Sunday's morning session -- his first in a pro tournament -- and Todd Zenner of Tulsa had the second in his final-round match against Bob Glass of Lawrence. Zenner finished 10th.

- West Ridge Lanes general manager and part owner Ron Hopper has agreed to host a regional event again next year, but it won't be in December. Hopper and PBA Southwest Region director Pete McCordic have set the dates for Nov. 9-11.

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