



Earl H. Wirz

December 22, 1915 - January 20, 2010

Earl Henry Wirz, age 94, of Highland, IL., died Wednesday, January 20, 2010, at Faith Care Center/Faith Countryside Homes in Highland, IL.

He was born December 22, 1915, in Highland, IL., the son of Edgar and Hilda (Koelz) Wirz.

On March 2, 1943, he married Minette F. Wirz nee Fowler who passed away November 9, 2007.

Earl was born in Highland and attended Highland Schools. He started spotting pins at age 13 in 1929. He worked for Walter \"Hap\" Hartman. Hap built a new bowling alley in Highland in 1951 and Earl set pins and was a Foul Judge who got to practice bowling when possible. Earl started in a league at age 17 and his first year he had a great ability to pick up spares. His hook became more devastating and within the next 2 years Earl was wanted by most contestants to be a member of their team. In 1938 Earl bowled a 298 in a match at Springfield, IL and a 694 series. In 1940 he won the doubles championship of the Greater St. Louis Bowling Association.

Earl enlisted in the US Army in March 1942. The week before he left he bowled 750 in the scratch league at the St. Boniface Alleys in Edwardsville. Earl spent five years in the Army suffering frost bite on the finger tips of his

right hand during the battle of the Bulge, and being awarded the Bronze Star. From his injuries, he struggled with his bowling in 1945-46. Things turned around in the 1946-47 season, when he finished with a 202 high average and 199 and 201 averages the next year in 2 different leagues. During those 2 seasons he rolled nine 700 series and in one weekend had 702-728-771. In 1948 Earl and Herb Lory leased Broadway Recreations, an 8 lane house on Broadway, until 1950 when Bill Michael purchased the business. Earl continued as manager until 1954 when he was hired at the VFW Post 5694 Bowling Lanes. He continued as manager until 1967 overseeing the addition of two additional lanes and automatic pinsetting. He started a Jr. Bowling League on Saturdays in 1961 with 6 teams. Earl and Lolly Monken purchased Hi Top Bowl until 1970 when he retired from the bowling business but actively bowled through the 1994-95 season.

Earl had 1-300 game, 1- 299 game, 1-298 game. Earl was the oldest living member inducted into the IL Bowling Association Hall of Fame on October 17, 2009.

He was also a member of V.F.W. Post 5694 of Highland (life member); Greater Carlyle Bowling Assoc. (Vice President for many years).

Survivors include Son-David E. (Jean E.) Wirz of Highland, Ill., Grandson-Ryan D. (Kim) Wirz of Highland, Ill., Great Grandchild-Braden D. Wirz of Highland, Ill.

He was preceded in death by Father-Edgar R. Wirz, Mother-Hilda L. Wirz nee Koelz, Wife-Minette F. Wirz nee Fowler, died 11/9/2007, Sister-Stella C. Bellm nee Wirz died 04/11/2001, Brother-Orville Wirz died at age 16

Arrangements are being handled by Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home in Highland, Ill.