**Exhibit Guide for Teachers**

Temporary Exhibit Area

Currently: *Sex, Death and Bowling*

This exhibit is the first in a series of exhibits we will have over bowling in film. The room includes stills of the movie and objects used in the film. This “Frame 4 Frame” Project is focused on raising funds to preserve/digitize our in-house film archive, which was utilized in the exhibited film *Sex, Death and Bowling*.

The History of Bowling

The next long leg of exhibits focuses on the history of bowling.

*Egypt*

The sport of bowling can be traced back to articles found in Egypt tombs dating back all the way to 5200 BC. Listen to the audio here to learn more. Make sure to take a right at Egypt (the left is a shortcut to the bathrooms and the bowling game at the end of the tour).

*Europe*

Bowling at pins is believed to have originated in Germany in the early 17th century. At that time, it was not a sport, but a religious ceremony. The first indoor bowling lanes were used in England in 1455. In the 1500’s, Sir Francis Drake, a famous English sailor, insisted on finishing his final frame before taking action against the Spanish Armada which was attacking from the English Channel. He is credited with introducing the game of bowling to many cultures as he circumnavigated the globe. Notice how the exhibit shows the different versions of bowling varying country to country in Europe.

*America*

The first record of bowling being played in America was by Dutch settlers in 1626 on Manhattan Island. In 1842, Connecticut outlawed the game of ninepin bowling as a result of heavy gambling on the games. Several bowling supporters changed the number of pins to ten, rearranged them into a triangle shape, and continued to encourage people to participate in the sport. This allowed them to play legally, since there were ten pins instead of nine! Texas is the only place in the US where official Nine Pin leagues and tournaments are still played; this is because it is considered an important aspect of cultural heritage for many German immigrants (and now their descendants) who came to central Texas in the 19th century. Compared to the several different versions of bowling in Europe that lasted for centuries, The American Bowling Congress was established and standardized the rules of bowling in 1895. Not long after in 1901, the first tournament for professionals and amateurs was held in 1901.

*Women in Bowling in the Early Days*

The reputation of bowling was as a gambler’s sport until women and high society got involved. Modified bowling alleys were installed into American mansions and in 1916, women’s bowling became official with the Women’s International Bowling Congress. The WIBC, as it was known, held its first women’s tournament in 1917. By 2005, the WIBC and the American Bowling Congress merged into what is now known as the United States Bowling Congress, which is located in this building here today.

*Pin Machines and Pin Setters*

Up until the 1940’s, pin boys were used to set up the pins when the players knocked them down. With the invention of an automatic pinsetter machine as early as 1936, pin boys eventually died out. The museum has two vintage lanes that have semi-automatic pin setting machines, but using those means hiring pin boys too! Listen to the audio we have set up of Ronnie about his experience as a pinboy.

*20th Century Bowling*

Listen to the audio of bowling’s history in the 20th century at the wooden newsstand, opposite of Ronnie the pinboy. As you can see from the exhibit, the 1950’s is largely considered the heyday for America bowling: the sport being televised on a daily basis had a huge impact on its popularity in American life. Sponsorships became common for bowling teams (see the Beer Exhibit) and superstar athletes emerged (see Dick Weber’s photo in the Beer Exhibit).

*Women in Bowling: 20th and 21st Century*

This exhibit covers 50 years of women in professional bowling. The video is approximately 12 minutes.

Jr. Powell Bowling Theater

This video covers the history of bowling and is approximately 10 minutes long.

Youth Bowling and Bowling on an International Scale

In 1982, the Young American Bowlers Alliance (YABA) was founded to promote bowling to children and teens, but later merged with the United States Bowling Congress in 2005 and its headquarters are located in this building today. There are a few games here that can be played (if the class is large, split into three groups and rotate between the games so everyone can play. A *Bowlopolis* video game, *Coaches’ Corner* (answer questions about bowling techniques), and *Where is Carmen Salvino?* (a trivia game about bowling in different countries).

Science and Technology of Bowling

Students first watch in its entirety the looping video covering how bowling balls are made.

*The Core Story of Bowling Balls*

Notice how the mass of the bowling balls are different in each core exhibited. These are designed so that each ball will travel a different way down the lane. Before the 1960’s, a more simple core was used and thus had more of a straight ahead approach, whereas once urethane balls were used, a player could use a “hook” and thus receive more strikes. Finger holes did not gain acceptability until 1889-99, and in the early 1930s, the three-hole ball gained popularity.

Timeline of the advancement of bowling ball materials:

1905: wooden to rubber

1960’s: rubber to plastic

1980’s: plastic to urethane

1990’s: urethane to urethane with resin

Late 1990’s: urethane with resin to urethane, resin, bits of glass

But all types of balls are still used today!

*Pin Construction*

Pins today are either made of synthetic materials, (most common one called the “Twister” pin) or maple wood.

*Lane Construction and Design*

The construction and design of the lanes are extremely standardized. The lanes are made of two types of wood (maple and pine) and that’s why they appear striped. The point where the different woods meet is called a dovetail. A lane is 60 feet long.

The type of oils used on lanes have changed dramatically since the 19th century. Today, synthetic oils like urethane are used. Recognizing oil patterns is an important skill for a player so that they may alter their ball placement technique for better scoring.

Hometown Heroics Kiosk

Two touchscreens where you can look up people in local hall of fames across the US.

Shoe Exhibit

To your left, adjacent to the bathrooms is a traveling exhibit about the history of bowling shoes.

Highway 66 Bowling Lanes

2 small bowling lanes where the students can test their bowling ability. Split into groups of up to 5.

Hall of Fame

Our Hall of Fame is pretty large. We have inducted over 700 players and because of this we have touchscreens available to search for players and bios. You may pull your favorite player up onto the screen and take a photo with him/her.

Gift Shop

Shop in the gift shop before exiting the International Bowling Campus. Thanks for coming!