

Joyce Taylor Chappell

Our inductee into the Tuscaloosa Bowling Hall of Fame tonight is Joyce Taylor Chappell. She is being honored tonight for her many years of meritorious service to the Tuscaloosa bowling community, and most of us here tonight have enjoyed competing against her for many years on various local leagues.

Joyce was born and raised in Ryland, Alabama which is northeast of Huntsville. She has one sister, Carol Turner, who also bowled for many years. Joyce married Benny Chappell in 1986, and she has 2 step-daughters (Valoree Watkins and Vanessa Goff) and 3 grandchildren (Kayleigh and Cranston Watkins and Kacey Goff).

Although most of us only know Joyce through our bowling connections with her, she has also had a very active and full life outside of bowling. She started her working career at NASA in 1967, and she moved to Tuscaloosa in 1969 and began working at the VA Medical Center where she remained until her retirement in 2005.

In 1977, she joined the Army Reserves and retired in 1999 after 22 years of service. During her military career, her unit was activated twice. The first time was in 1991 during Desert Storm where she served at Fort Benning for 4 ½ months. Her second activation was in 1996 during the Bosnia conflict. That time the unit was activated for a 9 month duration with 3 months in Germany and 6 months spent in Hungary. She returned home in the spring of 1997.

In addition to her interest in bowling, Joyce was also an avid softball player during high school and beyond. She played in an independent fast pitch league around the Huntsville area, and in 1967, her team finished 2nd in the State Tournament and she was named to the All State team. After she moved to Tuscaloosa, she continued to play on numerous slow pitch teams that traveled to many tournaments around the southeast.

Joyce started bowling in the early 1970s and is still competing today. She has served as team captain on several women's and mixed leagues and has served on numerous league committees and won countless league awards. She has been on teams that have won 11 league championships, and in 1992, she and her sister were local doubles champions. She was league president for the Crimson Bells league for 5 years and she was also secretary/treasurer for that league for 4 years. She has bowled in numerous local, state and national tournaments, including 24 state tournament appearances. Joyce has bowled a high game of 239, and has a high series of 578, wherein she bowled two games of 210.

Although she has been an active bowler in this community for many decades, her most impressive attribute is her eagerness to serve her bowling family in any way that she can. Not only has she dedicated her time serving as league officer and working on league committees, but also has always been most generous with giving her time to assist in all other bowling functions and fund-raisers, such as our bake sales and tournament work. For example, this past year, she was one of the worker bees during the USBC Open Tournament that was held in Tuscaloosa.

However, this volunteerism has always been a part of Joyce's life, like her work with the youth bowlers in 1987 through 1996, when she helped coach her step-daughters and the other children that were in the Just Us Kids YABA league at Bama Bowl on Saturday mornings and also traveled with them to State YABA Tournaments. I can also remember her hosting our Friday Night Mixed League for an end-of-the-year party and awards gathering at her lake home one season, and her making it one of the highlights of our many seasons together on that league.

Joyce has always exhibited the utmost degree of character and sportsmanship to all of us that she has bowled with and against all of these years, and I, like most of you, have been honored to know her for most of my bowling life. She remains a devoted wife, loving mother, and a great friend to us all. Please help me in congratulating a great person, a great bowler, and a great ambassador for the sport of bowling, Joyce Taylor Chappell.