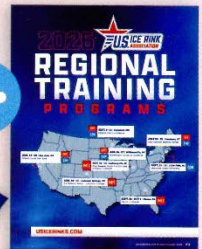


PROJECT IN PICTURES:

MAPLE GROVE
COMMUNITY CENTER



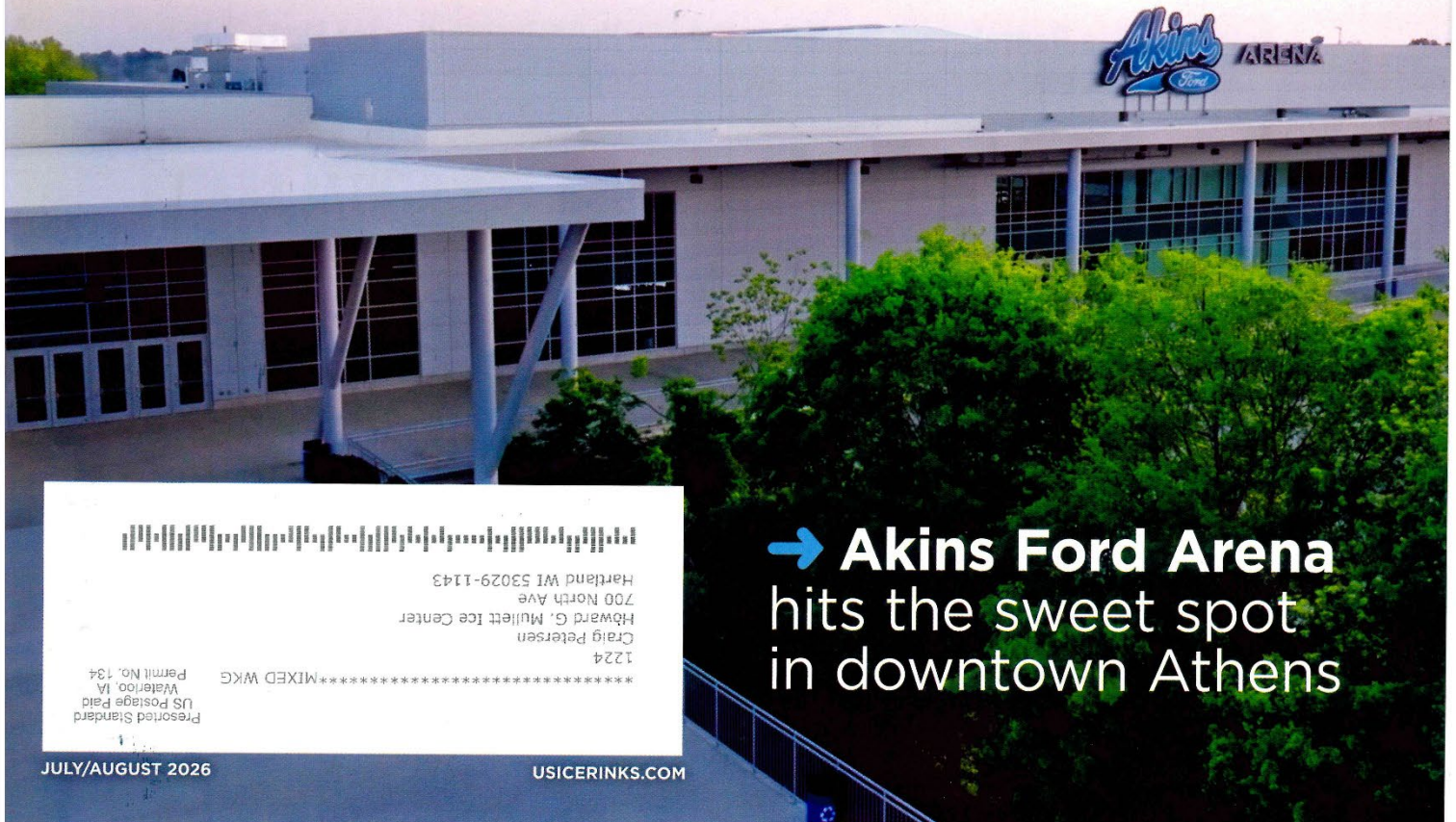
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RINK

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED STATES ICE RINK ASSOCIATION | **MAGAZINE**

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REAL PROGRAMS ★ Ice Bowling



Ice Bowling

/// by CRAIG PETERSEN, CIRM

► Sheboygan's annual Ice Bowling fundraiser requires months of planning and attracts thousands of attendees.

A Community Tradition at the Sheboygan Lakers Ice Center

FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS, the annual Ice Bowling fundraiser at the Sheboygan Lakers Ice Center has brought together the local community for one of Wisconsin's most unique and successful ice arena events.

Originally held outdoors, the event eventually moved inside the ice center to give organizers more control over weather conditions and overall event operations. Today, Ice Bowling has evolved into a major year-end fundraiser that attracts thousands of attendees and requires months of planning.

A Massive Community Effort

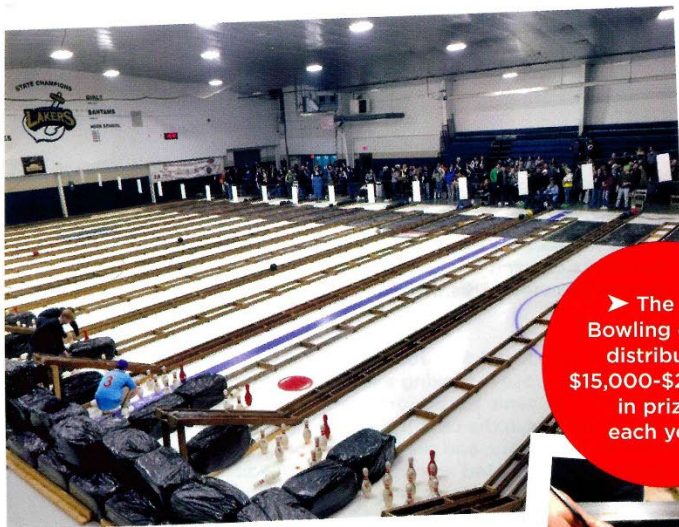
Planning for Ice Bowling begins each September with a dedicated committee of approximately 12 volunteers. Their responsibilities include securing major event sponsors, booking live entertainment, coordinating logistics, and organizing volunteers.

The committee hires bands, staging crews, and sound and lighting companies to create a festival atmosphere throughout

the weekend. A variety of musical acts are booked each year, and band announcements are released before team registration opens. This allows teams to strategically select game times based around the music acts they want to see, whether they prefer country, rock, or other genres.

In addition to entertainment, the committee works with local businesses to secure donated materials and community support. Large sections of carpeting are donated each year and used to cover roughly half of the ice surface where the bowlers throw from. Local nonprofit organizations assist with parking operations and shuttle transportation from nearby overflow parking areas and charge \$5 for parking on site.

Area bars and restaurants also play a role in the event's success by running shuttle services to the arena and encouraging their patrons to participate. Participating establishments receive discounts for the teams they send to the event. Local radio station partners help promote Ice Bowling through public service announcements and live interviews with organizers.



► The Ice Bowling event distributes \$15,000-\$20,000 in prizes each year.

Transforming an Ice Rink into a Bowling Alley

The event setup is an impressive operation in itself. A total of 18 bowling lanes are constructed across half of the ice sheet using custom-built wooden lane frames and ball returns. Hay bales serve as lane backstops, and the full setup process takes multiple days to complete, including removing several sections of the dasher boards and glass.

Unlike traditional bowling centers, the lanes are entirely manual. Every lane requires volunteer pin setters, many of whom are local youth hockey players. In addition, 8 to 10 adult volunteers serve as scorekeepers and officials to verify scores and strikes throughout the event.

Overall, Ice Bowling requires between 60 and 75 volunteers each shift, with or over 200 volunteer time slots to operate successfully each year.

A Successful Fundraiser

Ice Bowling generates between \$25,000 and \$30,000 annually for the Lakers Ice Center, with approximately 90% of the revenue coming from beer sales during the event weekend.

There is no admission or cover charge for spectators or people coming to watch the bands, helping create a welcoming and accessible atmosphere for the community. Teams pay an entry fee of \$32 for four frames of bowling and can sign up for as many game as they want.

The event also features an extensive prize structure supported by donations from local businesses. Bowlers can win prizes for individual strikes, while the top five individual bowlers compete for larger cash payouts, including a \$500 grand prize.



► Ice Bowling generates \$25,000-\$30,000 for the arena every year, with roughly 90% of the revenue coming from beer sales.

Additional team prizes and random drawing prizes help keep less experienced teams engaged and involved throughout the event.

In total, the event distributes between \$15,000 and \$20,000 in prizes each year.

Bringing the Community Together

Ice Bowling typically offers more than 400 available game slots during the weekend event, which runs approximately four hours on Friday evening and ten hours on Saturday. Teams can register and pay using cash, checks, or Venmo.

Attendance regularly exceeds 2,000 people each day, with an estimated 80% of attendees coming from outside the regular user groups of the Lakers Ice Center. This makes the

fundraiser not only a financial success, but also a major community outreach opportunity for the facility.

Beyond the bowling itself, the event includes carnival-style games and activities for children, creating a family-friendly environment that encourages new families to visit the facility and connect with local youth hockey programs.

More than just a fundraiser, Ice Bowling has become a longstanding community tradition that combines creativity, volunteerism, entertainment, and local partnerships into one unforgettable weekend. ★