



**NORMAN WEHRUNG**

Norm Wehrung has been an avid supporter and promoter of horseshoe pitching in New York State for several decades. He actively supports the game at the state level, tournament level and especially, at the club level. Promotion is evidenced by his organization and on-going leadership of league and tournament play.

He was one of the founders of the Getzville Crow's Nest Horseshoe Club at its inception in 1978. When he and several other local residents formed the league, they pitched from grass on just a couple of courts without lighting. By 1983, largely under Norm's leadership, lights had been added and the facility had been expanded to eight courts to accommodate a membership of more than forty. The club's success attracted horseshoe enthusiasts from Buffalo and its northern and eastern suburbs, extending the membership far beyond the confines of Getzville.

Success and growth continued. Concrete pitching platforms were added as were four more courts, and the lighting was correspondingly improved. Norm is not only the lighting expert, but in addition is always on hand to improve the courts, repair a broken stake, help with the concrete, procure horseshoes, fixtures, sand, hot dogs and whatever other ingredients are called for to further the program.

Today the Crow's Nest club has a membership of over sixty, with Norm Wehrung as President. He has served as president for half the time the club has existed - about thirteen years. It isn't that he

seeks this office, it's that, like many successful organizations, only a few outstanding members actively contribute to that success. Norm is the single most outstanding member of this organization; he is maintained in its presidency by acclaim of his fellow members. When Norm did step down from the presidency, he continued his service as treasurer for another four or five years, and was always available for consultation and work on the courts. In the quarter century since the club was founded, dozens of players have been introduced to the game, thanks to Norm's leadership.

Norm has been a member of the Lockport Men's Horseshoe League for more than twenty years, and is their current secretary. Previously, he served as president for three years and vice-president for another three years. He has participated as a member of their Board of Directors for many years and consistently maintains the courts. He has captained the Crow's Nest team throughout its tenure in the league, and has actively searched for replacement teams when, from time to time, others have dropped out of the league.

An example of Norm's dedication is how he became secretary. Three years ago a new member offered to take that post, but proved unable to handle it. When confronted with the prospect of having inadequate record keeping, Norm stepped up and took over the task, surely the most demanding faced by any horseshoe club. He still holds that position.

Over the past decade several Lockport Occasional Horseshoe Tournaments have been held at the Lockport's Outwater Park courts, where the Men's League plays. Norm has been one of the driving forces in organizing and running this popular, sanctioned tournament. He uses his extensive personal contacts to inform pitchers of the coming tournament, helps sign them up and then undertakes the physical work of ensuring that the tournament runs smoothly. Physical work is meant literally because he, with at most one or two others, turns and waters the courts - all fifteen of them - the day before the event. On the day of the tournament he brings equipment, food and beverages, sets up the scoring facilities and, thanks to his grandchildren, even provides some of the scorekeepers. And, when the tournament ends and the pitchers all go home, he's there to clean up as well.

He has been an NYSHPA member for well over twenty years and promote the success of that enterprise. Norm regularly attends NYSHPA meetings as a representative of both the Crow's Nest and the Lockport Men's League.

Reserved by nature, much of the work Norm does goes unheralded. No one is aware that he has transported shoes from one place to another to make them available to other pitchers - they just get there. Few are aware that he has repaired a lighting problem, replaced a stake, arranged a club function or represented the club at the NYSHPA meeting. Nor do many know who brought the hot dogs, or chopped the onions or provided the charcoal at a horseshoe function - it just happens. More often than not, Norm was responsible.

Norm's successes are not limited to horseshoes. Born in Watford City, North Dakota, he moved to Western New York in 1948. The following year he married the former Norma Stuewe and was soon occupied in his life-long profession of television sales and repair. The couple have three children and six grandchildren.

While he has worked in television and electronics as an employee, Norm also operates his own business, which continues to the present. As a Businessman he became involved in several community activities including the Lions Club and local business organizations. He is a leader in the Getzville Business Men's Association and is an active member of the Western New York Electronics Guild, an organization that provides business and technical guidance to those in that field.

A Thirty-Second Degree Mason, Norm is a member of the Shrine's Motor Corps, a group he has led in the past. He was a motorcycling enthusiast until an accident resulted in serious injuries that convinced him to give up the hobby in deference to his family responsibilities.

I believe that the many contributions to the promotion of horseshoe pitching in Western New York and in New York state by a well rounded individual qualify Norman Wehrung for election to the New York State Horseshoes Pitchers Hall of Fame. His unassuming devotion to the game, to its participants and to its organization have made a profound, positive and lasting impact on our sport that deserves the highest recognition.

