

The Board Talk

News and Views
from the World
of Shuffleboard

Vol. 1 No. 9

The Board Talk is published by George & Donna Wilber, 421 E. Sheridan Road, Lansing, Michigan 48906; phone 517-371-2538.

November 1984

Hammer

EDITOR'S NOTE: In last month's Hammer column, Missouri reporter Woodie Cockrum discussed the lack of care and play boards in the north St. Louis area were getting. He urged Board Talk readers to share what their cities and towns do to keep shuffleboard active. We believe one of the key problems in shuffleboard is the lack of organization. Therefore, we're happy to share the ideas of John McDermott, who has been promoting the formation of a Michigan Shuffleboard Association, because what his plan does is address the care of boards, uniformity of tournament rules, sponsorship and promotion of the sport. Unless state associations are formed, there will be little chance for the development of credible local, state and regional tournaments to qualify for national competition where participation is based on ability to play rather than ability to pay. Let us hear from you on this topic!

Proposed Guidelines for Michigan Shuffleboard Association

GOALS — Organize and promote shuffleboard leagues and tournaments; standardize playing conditions and rules; eliminate scheduling conflicts for tournaments; run state of Michigan championships for men's and women's singles, doubles, mixed doubles and team events; increase the number of players by upgrading the quality of playing conditions.

RULES AND GUIDELINES — All tournaments will pay four places; all boards will be under the supervision of the tournament committee regarding use of powdered wax, cleaner and glaze prior to and during the tournament; the host bar will supply a set of tournament quality weights; players may bring their own weights to a tournament provided they are approved by the tournament committee.

Players will be allowed to walk to the opposite end of the board during play; waxing of the corners to the foul line will be allowed; any weight in danger of falling off the board may be made "safe" by the tournament committee at the request of the players; boards will be reserved Friday evening from 8 p.m. on for weekend tournament participants; boards will be reserved for tournament players after conclusion of the tournament for open play; any players not present when it is their turn to play will receive a five-minute grace period and then be penalized one point per minute; all boards must be at least six inches away from the wall.

Any situations not covered by Michigan Shuffleboard Association rules will be decided by referring to the American Shuffleboard rulebook and after that to the tournament committee.

Suggestion boxes will be placed at all tournaments for player suggestions on rules or ways to improve the tournaments or upgrade the playing conditions.

There will be a \$25 fee to have a tournament sanctioned by the Michigan Shuffleboard Association. If a bar wishes to have a tournament run by the MSA, a flexible fee depending on size of bar, number of teams and number of boards, will be charged.

Players are encouraged to patronize the establishments that are making the commitment to providing a quality playing environment and conditions.

John McDermott, Detroit, Mich.

Tourney Talk

Washington — The Boardwalk and Larry & Ray's Tavern in Tacoma hosted the "Best of the West" tournament on Oct. 19. Twenty-two teams played on the five boards for \$1,100 in prize money plus \$3,000 calcutta. Darrell Nelson, Eugene, Ore., and Galen Gaunee, Portland, Ore., finished first in the best 2 of 3 double elimination. In second place were Don Mitchell, Tacoma, Wash., and Fred Johns, Longview, Wash. Jim Foran, Tacoma, and Jim Allis, Seattle, finished in third place, and Gary George and Ron Webster of Tacoma took fourth place.

Central Indiana — Reporter Steve Hart reports the following tourney results:

Town Tavern, Summitville, with 21 teams, held a doubles tournament on Oct. 6 with prize money of \$1,500. First place was Bobby Brown Jr. and Mel; second place, Ron Wilburn and Curly McNally; third place, Tom and Bob Vorndran; fourth, Steve Johnson and Randy Valentine.

Triangle Bar, Anderson, with 22 teams, held a doubles tournament on Oct. 13 with prize money of \$1,650. First place was won by John Spillman and John Hume; second, Jerry Wor and Bob Vorhees; third, Bobby Brown Jr. and Bill Lester; fourth, Jim DeWitte and Bob Brown Sr.

Hog House, Ingalls, held a doubles tournament Oct. 21 with 24 teams and a total prize purse of \$2,095. First place, Don Criswell and Bill Lester; second, Jerry Wor and Bob Vorhees; third, Ron Hennis and Brian Valentine; fourth, Ron Wilburn and Curly McNally.

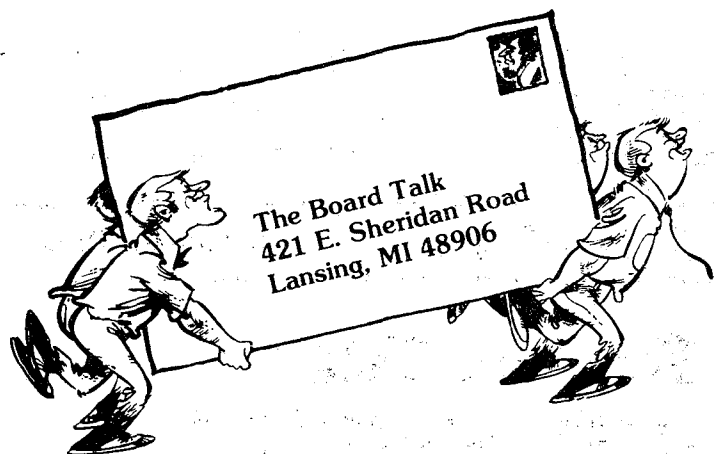
Upcoming action for November in Central Indiana includes Sportsman's Lounge, Muncie, Nov. 10; Werty's Place, Anderson, Nov. 17; and American Bar, Portland, Nov. 24. All are welcome. Auctions start at 12 noon.

California — The first annual Fall Tournament at the Edgewood in Bellflower, held Oct. 27-28, was won by Ted "Z" in first place; Billy Chiles, second; and Ron Cash, third.

Michigan — The doubles tournament at the Dublin House in Detroit Oct. 13-14 was won by John McDermott, Detroit, and Bud Broka, Toledo, Ohio, in first; John Leach and John Melson, both of Lake Orion, second; Sue Spack and Gene Goche, Union Lake, third; Greg Broka, Toledo, Ohio and Lou Herfi, Detroit, fourth.

The Chit Chat Lounge in Detroit held a doubles tourney on Oct. 27-28. Lee McDonald, Chicago, Ill., and Greg Broka, Toledo, Ohio, took first. George Wilber, Lansing, and Jim Hoffman, Livonia, finished second. John Myles, Detroit, and Joe Kowaleski, Pontiac, took third and Bud Broka, Toledo, and John McDermott, Detroit, were fourth.

Upcoming tournaments include an open doubles at the Wagon Wheel Tavern, Lake Orion, on Nov. 10-11, 102 S. Broadway, phone 313-693-6789; and a mixed doubles at Papa's Ace Lounge, 23617 Van Dyke, Warren, on Dec. 1-2. Phone 313-757-6760 for information.



Indiana Player Who Are You?

In the August issue of *The Board Talk*, I wrote an article about Myers Tavern, located at 12470 Old Hallsferry Road in St. Louis, Missouri. Thanks to the circulation of *The Board Talk*, a shuffleboard player from Indiana stopped by. He told Benny, the owner, that he had read about his place in *The Board Talk*. He was looking for a good match.

Benny called one of their better players called Bucko. Apparently no one there was competition for this Indiana man. Harry, the night bartender at Myers, said he was the best he had ever seen.

I'm sorry this player did not contact me. I could have directed him to Elwood or the Korner Bar. There are a few good players around that could give anyone a pretty good game.

I would like to thank this player from Indiana for stopping by Myers. They liked you there. Please let *The Board Talk* know who you are.

Woodie Cockrum, St. Louis, Mo.

Looking for Action

I would appreciate any information on upcoming doubles tournaments in Pennsylvania, Ohio or Indiana.

Al Ryan, 817 Friel Place, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Phone 212-854-7086

Christmas Gift Idea!

You know how much you enjoy reading *The Board Talk*, so why not share it with a shuffleboard friend! Order now for Christmas and we'll enclose a gift card with the December issue. Use the form below.

Enclosed is my check for \$10.00. Please send *The Board Talk* to:

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Mail with your check or money order for \$10, made payable to *The Board Talk*, to: *The Board Talk*, 421 E. Sheridan Road, Lansing, Mich. 48906.

Letters to the Editors

Gonna Have a Good Time at the Good Time Tonight

Here at the Lakewood Good Times Saloon, we have just started reading your newsletter. Since we opened for business on June 13 of this year, our shuffleboard table has been a great factor in the business that comes through our front door.

Recently, we started our "Kid Jinks Shuffleboard League." We decided on that name after we ran across a 1950 issue of *Shuffleboard Times* highlighting a promotional tour by Kid Jinks. We offered openings for eight teams and filled the spots in two days. The league is being run in conjunction with two of our other bars in the Denver area — the No Frills Grill and Paddy Boots.

After a seven week league schedule, we will take top teams from our saloon and set up matches with the other two bars. We haven't decided on the types of awards we will give, but as our name implies, we want everyone to have a "good time."

After two weeks of play, the league was led by the "Puck Busters" team of Wayne Bishop and Randy Grisdale. In second place was the "Destroyers" team of Greg Wyatt and Bern Emery.

The three bars I have mentioned so far are part of the Grand American Fare chain. Other Grand American bars in Colorado with shuffleboards are O'Furry's in Colorado Springs, the State Armory in Greeley, and Washington's in Fort Collins.

We plan on contributing monthly letters and pictures of our league action to your newsletter. We are also proud to be a new advertiser in *The Board Talk*.

Jim Ferrier, Assistant Manager & League "Commissioner"
Lakewood Inn Good Times Saloon, Lakewood, Colorado

Board Talk Reporters

We're still looking for volunteer reporters. If you're interested, let us know. Send your news to your state reporter or directly to *The Board Talk*, 421 E. Sheridan Road, Lansing, Mich. 48906.

California: Ben Benjestorf, *The Edgewood*, 10122 E. Rosecrans, Bellflower, Calif. 90706, phone 213-866-9268

Colorado: Jim Ferrier, Lakewood Inn Good Times Saloon, 1251 Wadsworth Blvd., Lakewood, Colo. 80215, phone 303-233-3257

Indiana: Steve Hart, 4503 Princeton Dr., Anderson, Ind. 46014

Missouri: Woodie & Jean Cockrum, 54 E. Cardigan Dr., St. Louis, Mo. 63135, phone 314-524-1024

Nevada: (Balboa) Ron Schweikert, 1528 Amapola Dr., Las Vegas, Nev. 89122

Oregon: Jolene Lembke, 20356 Shahala Ct., Bend, Ore. 97708, phone 503-389-4888

Texas: Sandy Jenkins, 3947 Lenel, Dallas, Texas 75220, phone 214-741-5171, ext. 378 (weekdays), 214-353-9548 (evenings)

Washington: Marv & Rosa White, West One Tavern, W. 1 Spokane Falls Blvd., Spokane, Wash. 99201, phone 509-747-9453

Who Makes The Board Talk Happen?

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The shuffleboard family is a close one even though its members may be miles apart. Love of the game is our common denominator, but beyond that, unless we hold an annual "family" reunion, familiar names remain just that — names without faces or personalities. We thought you'd be interested in who makes The Board Talk happen, so we'll be more than just names to you. This month, we'll introduce ourselves and next month our immediate support system. In the January and February issues, we'll introduce our state reporters (maybe by then our list will be so long it will take more than two issues), and in subsequent issues, we'll highlight our faithful advertising supporters.*

Ask George and Donna Wilber today whose idea it was to start *The Board Talk* and each will point to the other.

"It couldn't have been me," said Donna. "I've already got enough to do."

"It couldn't have been me," said George. "At this stage of my life, I'd only gamble on a sure thing."

It's been just about a year ago that the idea for publishing a shuffleboard newsletter was spawned, by one or both of the Wilbers.



George and Donna Wilber (left), editors of *The Board Talk*, are no strangers to the challenges of publishing. Lorayne Case (right), the Wilber's assistant when they published a weekly newspaper, remains a loyal cheerleader for their new venture.

"Regardless of whose idea it was, we agreed on some basic principles — first, there was a need for a publication for shuffleboarders, and second, we wouldn't make any huge investment to prove that filling that need could be a viable venture," Donna explained.

"We had some positive things going for us. George was an active shuffleboarder and had a real love for the game. We'd had experience publishing our own weekly newspaper

for four years. At my place of employment, we had the facilities and capabilities for typesetting and design of a newsletter. We also knew some printers who would give us good quality at a fair price.

"But there were some negatives involved, too. First and foremost, we'd experienced a failure in the publishing business. We'd invested all our worldly possessions in a weekly newspaper and four years later, when most people our age are pretty well established in their careers and saving for retirement, we were broke and starting all over again. We both agreed that no way would we go through that again."

"It was lack of advertising support that caused that failure," said George, "and that was our main concern with *The Board Talk*. We hoped from the beginning that we'd have advertising support from shuffleboard establishments so

we wouldn't have to charge the players any subscription fee.

"When that advertising support didn't come through, it was a real tough decision to start charging shuffleboarders for the newsletter, especially since they'd been getting it free for a couple months. I've seen the business they bring into taverns with leagues and tournaments and I found it kind of hard to swallow. On the other hand, I can also understand their reluctance to advertise in a new publication that can't provide them with any impressive circulation figures.

"But the response from the shuffleboard players has been great. They've been real supportive. Our only problem is reaching the ones who don't know there is a *Board Talk*," he said.

In Retrospect

Are either of them sorry that the seed of an idea for *The Board Talk* rooted and began to grow? What changes has it made in their personal lives? Have the human and financial resources invested been worthwhile? Who are these people anyway?

Up until *The Board Talk* was six months old, George, a former real estate salesman, had worked for Art's Bar and Stober's Lounge in Lansing. As an employee of two of the area's top shuffleboard establishments, he found he had a "touch" for the boards and the TLC they needed. After a visit to the facilities of the American Shuffleboard Company in New Jersey, he became a sales rep for their products.

When the demand increased, George's Shuffleboard Supplies and Services became an arm of *The Board Talk*. The refinishing of boards will soon become a part of the service. A design, typesetting, printing and distribution service for shuffleboard tournament flyers is another new service. The business is now a full-time job for George.

Donna is manager of the Information Services Department for the Michigan Farm Bureau. Her four-person department is responsible for editing a magazine, newsletters, brochures, graphic design, typesetting services, photography, audio-visual productions, news media services, press relations and training of county Farm Bureau information volunteers. It's not a 9 to 5 job so fitting *The Board Talk* into her schedule means night and weekend work. She's not a shuffleboarder, but she is an enthusiastic cheerleader.

Time with two active grandsons, ages 4 and 8, remains a top priority for George and Donna. They know that the day will come, too soon, when school activities, sports and girlfriends will replace Friday nights with Nonny and Pa.

"Nursing *The Board Talk* through its first year has been like having another baby," said Donna. "It keeps us up at night, restricts our social life, causes us lots of worry and is expensive to raise.

"I ask myself sometimes why we decided to give birth to another 'child' at our age, but there certainly have been some high points. Every time we get a letter from a subscriber or a contribution from one of our reporters, I know why we did it. That feedback really moves me! And we've had the opportunity to meet some great people we might not have met if it weren't for *The Board Talk*," she said.

"I think our greatest challenge has been getting the information to serve a national audience," said George. "We started out to be a local publication and then responded to broad encouragement to go national. Getting an information network established across the U.S. is difficult when
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Best Place in the U.S.

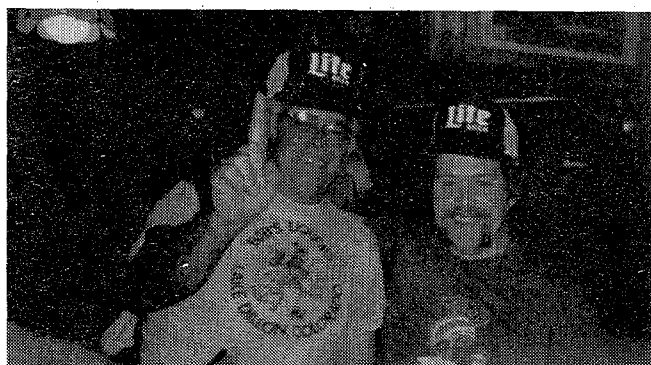
EDITOR'S NOTE: We're pleased that since we offered an invitation to shuffleboarders last May to nominate the best place in the U.S. for shuffleboard action, we've had one or more nominations each month. We hope it keeps going indefinitely.

WARRENTON, OREGON

Nominated by John Ressler

The Seafarer Tavern, 75 NE Harbor Court, Warrenton

If you're after good times, good food, friendly folks and excellent shuffleboard — make the Seafarer Tavern tops on your list. Hosts Willard and Romona Hutson love shuffleboard and promote the game. The Seafarer Tavern has three boards and is located in the most northwestern corner of Oregon at the mouth of the Colombia River. You can find plenty of action here!



The Seafarer Tavern hosted a Labor Day doubles tournament, attracting some of the top players from the Great Northwest. Winners were Bruce Wechter and John Mull (shown after their victory) in first place, Doug and Lee Debois in second, and Willard Hutson and Bert Eastburn, third.

Who Makes It Happen?

(continued from page 3)

you don't have any leads on who the shuffleboarders are and where they're located.

"If we had reporters in every state like the few we do have, we wouldn't have any problems. They're the heart of *The Board Talk* and we love 'em!

"It's also been a challenge to get our local shuffleboarders to accept the fact that we are a national publication. At first, we had a lot of pressure to publish their city league standings. Some still can't understand why we don't personally cover every tournament in the state. But they're coming around and they like reading about shuffleboard action in other states," he said.

Hopes for the Future

Do the editors have some long range goals for *The Board Talk*? Indeed, they do. Being a practical Virgo, George keeps his goals realistic and hopefully achievable.

"My goal for the next year is to make it pay for itself by gaining subscribers and advertisers. To achieve that goal, we'll have to have reporters in all the major shuffleboard states, so that's a key objective," he said.

"By 1986, my goal is for *The Board Talk* to be financially stable enough to give me a raise and get me out of the minimum wage bracket."

Donna, the adventurous Airies in the partnership, has somewhat loftier goals.

"My long range goal is that by the time I retire from my full-time career, *The Board Talk* will be bringing in sufficient income so we can spend three weeks of the month traveling around the country covering all the tournaments and interviewing the people who make up the world of shuffleboard, and one week getting it written and published," she said. "Maybe we could start a TV show called 'On the Road With *The Board Talk*.'"

SHUFFLEBOARD DIRECTORY

Lakewood Inn Saloon

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1251 Wadsworth Blvd., Lakewood, Colo. 303-233-3257
Owner: Dan O'Malley

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The Boardwalk

3 boards second to none-darts-pool-good food
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Your Hosts: Gare Wack and Bob Freeman