

The Board Talk

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Vol. 17, No. 2

February 2000

Houston Holiday Open: Bah! Y2K Humbug!

By Don Meehan

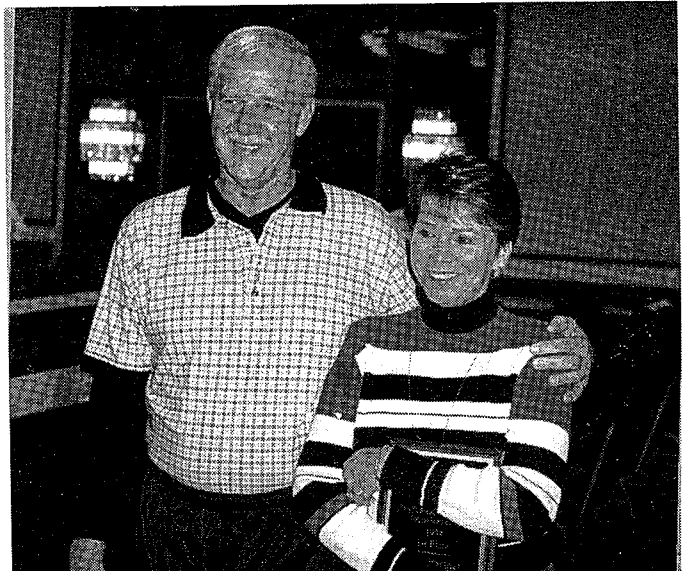
- 170 Shufflers from Nine States
- Diana Hagen Inducted into Texas Hall of Fame
- New Year's Eve Bash Fun for Everyone

Dateline Houston: The last major shuffleboard tournament of the millennium came off "without a hitch" in Houston, Texas on Dec. 26-31, 1999. Organizers Jack Scott and Johnny Ballard moved the 4th edition of the tournament to an expanded venue, the Houston Greenspoint Marriott Hotel, and 170 shuffleboarders from nine states followed them. Competition took place on 16 beautiful boards in the hotel's Grand Ballroom. The hotel also offered \$49.95 deluxe rooms and free transportation to and from Houston Intercontinental Airport, located nearby.

Veteran shuffleboard player and large tournament volunteer Lyndon ("Coach") Baize from Austin opined: "This is a good tournament. You folks do a great job. I've seen and worked a lot of tournaments and this is real smooth. Lots of folks are looking for something to do right after Christmas and it's good to get out and have some fun, win or lose, and shake those holiday blues!" Right on, Coach! (Editor's Note: Did you check out Coach's sexy legs on the cover of the January issue?)

Official tournament competition commenced on Sunday, Dec. 26, with a pro-am draw and an amateur draw. In the pro-am, Johnny Wayne Crawford of Dallas teamed with Houstonian Stan Stinson to withstand a fierce challenge from Arlington's Jeri Billard and Houston's Danny Norris and take first place. Mitch Melton and Mahlon Nobles from the Dallas-Ft. Worth area claimed third, while C.W. Walker and Jack Davis of Ft. Worth finished fourth. The amateur draw saw the Houston team of John "JT" Thames and Chuck Leach complete the event undefeated, despite a furious assault by fellow Houstonians Don ("Hitman") Meehan and Jim ("Rainbow") Bramlett. The team of Houstonian Wayne Hammond and

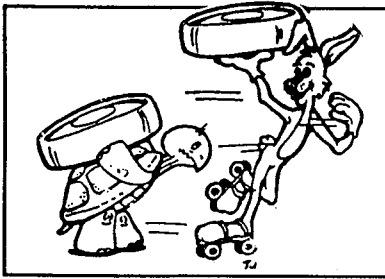
Jason Veal, newly moved to Oklahoma City, placed third, while Len Webster of Omaha and Leon Black of Lansing, Michigan, eased into fourth. Houston players Jim Payne and George Marx, Perla Scott and James Cato shared fifth and sixth place honors.



While Diana Hagen hugs her plaque, Johnny Wayne Crawford gives a congratulatory hug to Diana for her induction into the Texas Hall of Fame.

Day Two featured the ABC draw, an event in which players of all skill levels team up with "A" players playing "A"s, B's playing B's, etc. First place was claimed by Gwyn Orsi and Jim Kosicke of Omaha and Danny Norris of Houston. Johnny Wayne ("The Great One") Crawford led teammates Pete Worsnop of Houston and Jim Coulter of Huntington Beach, California, to second place. New Texas Shuffleboard Hall of Fame member Diana ("Queen of the Jungle") Hagen mentored fellow Houstonian Gilbert ("Silent Assassin") Baird and Marilu Roberts of Omaha to a third place finish. The team of Jim McGee of Houston, Mahlon Nobles of Dallas and Marie Coulter of Huntington Beach, California, claimed fourth.

(continued on Page 16)



Shufflers' Notebook

News and Views from The World of Shuffleboard

Dixie Belle Closes

In the event that you have not heard yet, it is with heavy heart that I must inform you of the permanent closing of the Dixie Belle (Downey, California) on Jan. 3, 2000. Those of us who have frequented the Belle over the years have spent many enjoyable hours there, and carry away with us only the best of memories. The Dixie Belle wasn't just a place to meet and play, it was a feeling of friendship and kinship that still ties us all together. And although we can no longer invite our shuffleboard friends into our "home," we would like to let them all know that when they least expect us, we'll be dropping in on them!

Chris Brown for All the Gang: Dixie Debbie, Wes and Eileen, Jimmy Anderson, Evie and Billy, Doug, Larry, Joe M and Joe Y

We were very sorry to receive this news, Chris. We had the very pleasant experience of being your guests for the Board Talk Shufflers' Reunion in 1996 and saw first-hand that special friendship and kinship you describe. We wish you all the very best in the future.

A New Tournament Site Looks to Bright Future

Please add the VFW Post #9095 to the national shuffleboard network. We have a long history of shuffleboard players at the Post competition level, but only in the past year have we ventured out to encourage out-of-towners and out-of-state visitors to join us in our expanded tournaments.

--ATTENTION--

If you have a red check below, it means your subscription has expired. Use the form inside to renew NOW so you won't miss next month's issue!

We still have much to learn, but with the quality of players like Mr. Tony Pelton, one of our members, and the support from recognized players such as Eugene McLeod and Glen Davidson from other states, we have significantly raised the quality of play in our post. We look forward to many great tournaments in the future and encourage your readers, when they are in our area, to drop in to play a few games with our players or just stop for a visit.

Your publication has been a popular and informative item in our post. Thank you for a great job in promoting shuffleboard play.

Ron L. Helton, Adjutant/Quartermaster, VFW Post #9095, Little Rock, Arkansas

Your Post was listed in the "Play Your Way Across the U.S.A." listing in January, Ron, and we hope you get lots of company! We hope you continue using the pages of The Board Talk to promote your events -- don't forget the calendar! We received word from Gene McLeod that Tony recently lost his Mom. If anyone would like to send him a card: Tony Pelton, 720 Forest Ln., Benton AR 72015.

Nebraskans Salute Houston Holiday Open

I had to drop a line to let people know what a great time it was at the Houston Holiday Open and the lifelong friends we met from Kentucky and Washington. It was Len's and my first trip there, and we can't wait to go back. The tournament ran smoothly with 16 boards and a lot of round robins in between events.

The Marriott was very accommodating also. If you had a problem with anything, Jack Scott and Johnny B were right there to fix it. They even had a hospitality room for those people who didn't want to call it quits at 2 a.m. It was the first time we got to chat with the pros on a personal level from the Texas area, and they were all very hospitable with

(continued on Page 19)

Publication Content Information

The Board Talk reserves the right to reject any advertising or editorial contributions that the publishers deem unacceptable, either because of objectionable material or inconsistency with the newsletter's general editorial and advertising policies.

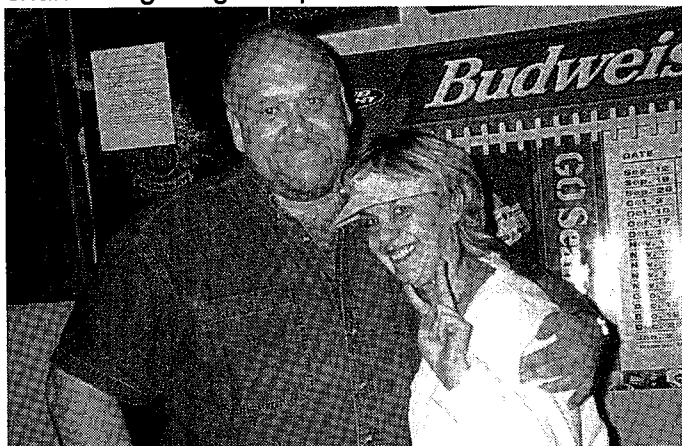
Orsi/Pearson Win Fir Cone's 9th Annual Mixed Doubles

By Dwayne Dibley

The Fir Cone Tavern in Shelton, Washington, hosted its 9th Annual Mixed Doubles Tournament on Nov. 13-14. November is a tough tournament month in the Northwest, with one scheduled every weekend. That makes the players a little weary, but there certainly isn't a lack of action. Some people would think that this tough schedule is scaring players away. If that's what you think, consider this: Billy Hagmann and Jeff Kersting were seen in a local dress shop, reportedly for fittings. I hear that they have partners; I hope they meant for shuffleboard.

The Fir Cone had its usual Friday night A-B draw, which seems to be a popular event in Shelton. Players of all skill levels sign up for a shot at temporary glory and the money isn't bad either. This time Carl Roush and Jeanette Hohn (Devil Woman) finished on top of a really tough crowd of competitors. This revved everyone up for the main event on Saturday.

This year's mixed doubles saw competitors from as far away as Omaha, Nebraska, and Coquitlam, British Columbia, come to the Fir Cone for a chance of getting their picture on the wall.

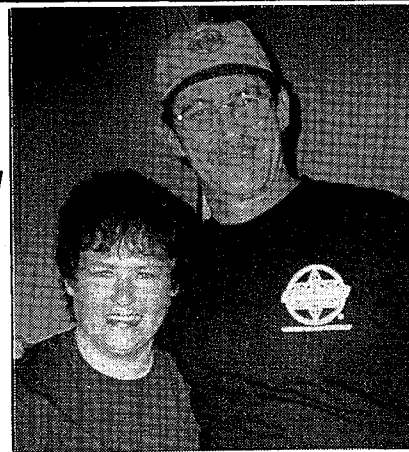


Winners were Gwyn Orsi of Nebraska and Washington State Singles Champion Larry Pearson.



A surprising second to most people -- but no surprise at the Fir Cone -- was the team of Kathy and Mike Keevil.

Last year's winners, Linda Steffensen and Carl Roush, had to settle for third place this year.



"Devil Woman" and her partner, Mel Hohn, ended up in fourth place.

Mike Thorpe and Judy George tied for fifth place with Cheri Schrum and Mike Waters.

On Saturday, an abundance of food was served to nourish weary players. The Shelton Shuffleboard Community once again pitched in to create a wonderful environment with great eats.

The Fir Cone Tavern hosted an A-B-C Bring Your Own Team on Jan. 22-23. Watch for the results of that event in the next issue.

Manitoba Shufflers Dominate Canadian Championships

The names of Manitoba shuffleboard players appeared most frequently in the list of winners at the Canadian Championships.

In the men's singles, Harold Schmidt of Manitoba took fourth place. In the women's singles, Wendy Popkes was first. In the mixed doubles, it was the husband and wife team of Harold and Kim Schmidt who took second place honors. In the ladies' doubles, Sandra Jacoby and Kim Schmidt of Manitoba took first place. Mike Jacoby and Harvey Groleau took second in the men's doubles.

And the "Grand Aggregate" winner was, of course, Manitoba!

**Was your partner/opponent
in the last event you played in a
Board Talk subscriber?
SPREAD THE GOOD WORD!**

Upcoming Events Across the Nation

Washington

SWEETHEART TOURNEY AT BLUE GOOSE, PORT ORCHARD, FEB. 11-13

The Blue Goose in Port Orchard will once again host their popular Sweetheart tournament on Feb. 11-13. This is a Pacific Northwest favorite fun weekend, but it's open to all travelling shufflers. For further information, call 360-876-9880.

MASTERS 2000 AT FIR CONE TAVERN, SHELTON, FEB. 26-27

The Fir Cone Tavern will host its 20th Masters Shuffleboard Tournament on Feb. 26-27. Action will start with a \$20 A-B draw on Friday, Feb. 25, single game, single elimination.

The Masters will begin with a sponsor sale at 10 a.m. Saturday. Entry is \$25 per player, two out of three 15 points in the winner's bracket, one 21 point game in the loser's bracket. This is an Evergreen Shuffleboard Association sanctioned tournament.

There will be a tournament feed on Saturday. RV parking is available. For information, contact Mel Hohn at 360-426-2221 or e-mail: MHOHN2@AOL.COM

California

BLINKY'S PRESIDENTS' DAY TOURNEY, SANTA CLARA, FEB. 13-21

Blinky's Sports Cafe, 3145 El Camino Real in Santa Clara, will host its 9th Annual Presidents' Day Tournament starting Sunday, Feb. 13, and continuing through Monday, Feb. 21. A highlight of this annual event will be the inductions of Don Cox into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame and Hal Perry into the National Hall of Fame. Induction ceremonies are scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 19, at 2 p.m.

Action starts with a sweetheart doubles on Feb. 13, \$20 per person entry, sponsor sale starting at 1:30 p.m. **Note: format change from last month's flyer:** An amateur bring partner (add to 4) will be held on Monday, Feb. 14, with sponsor sale at 6:15

p.m. All of these events are single game, double elimination.

Open to all shufflers is the Pro/Am ABC event on Wednesday, Feb. 16, \$20 each entry, 2 of 3 games, double elimination. Sponsor sale starts at 6:15 p.m. This event will continue at 6 p.m. on Thursday.

On Friday, Feb. 18, the open pro doubles sponsor sale will be held at 8 p.m. with play starting on Saturday at 9 a.m. \$200 per team entry fee, 2 of 3 games, double elimination. Following the induction ceremonies, there will be a barbecue and pro singles sponsor sale starting at 5 p.m. The open pro singles, \$100 entry, 2 of 3, double elimination, will start at 9 a.m. on Sunday and conclude on Monday, Feb. 21.

For hotel recommendations, call Blinky's, 408-241-3933. For tournament information, call Rick Thomas at 408-578-0822 or E-mail him at TOMKAT8@PRODIGY.NET Advance reservations are advised.

Michigan

4TH ANNUAL SAGINAW VALLEY OPEN, McCABE'S, SAGINAW, FEB. 18-20

The 4th Annual Saginaw Valley Open will be held at McCabe's Food & Spirits, 54 E. Morley Drive (M-46) in Saginaw on Feb. 18-20 with three events played on four boards.

Action will begin on Friday with a draw partner event, \$25 per player, limit of 48 players, sale at 7:30 p.m. with play immediately following. "A" players (-1, 0 or 1) may not draw each other.

A handicap doubles is on the agenda for Saturday. You may play with any partner you want, but the higher-rated team will spot the lower-rated team the difference in team handicap.

A handicap singles will be held on Sunday with a progressive entry fee: \$100 for -1's, \$80 for 0's, \$60 for 1's, \$40 for 2's, and \$20 for 3's, 4's and 5's. Sale at 10 a.m. Sunday with play immediately following.

All events are single game, double elimination, 12 point games in the draw, 15 points in the singles and doubles. Entry deadlines are: 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 18, for the draw; 1 p.m. Saturday afternoon for both the open doubles and open singles. A \$5 registration fee will go to tournament director Rob Kem.

To get to McCabe's, take I-75 to Exit 149A and go east approximately 1/2 mile. The bar opens daily

at 7 a.m., serves great food and will have four boards on hand for the tournament (boards furnished by Decker Shuffleboard, Toledo, Ohio).

For information, call Dave at McCabe's, 517-754-3621, or The Shuffleboard Federation at 248-380-9300.

Texas

4TH MOTHER'S SPRING FLING, CORPUS CHRISTI, MARCH 10-12

Mothers Pizza and Por Boys, 12135 Leopard St., Corpus Christi, will host their 4th annual "Spring Fling" on March 10-12. Action will start at 8 p.m. Friday with an A-B handicapped draw, followed on Saturday at 1 p.m. with a free barbeque and a handicapped 4-person team event with \$200 added prize money. The weekend will be capped off with a handicapped singles event at noon on Sunday, March 12.

For further information, contact Neil Garvin at 361-854-3632, or E-mail: judygarvin@prodigy.net

STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, TAZ COUNTRY, MARCH 30-APRIL 2

The Texas State Championship Tournament has been scheduled for March 30-April 2 at Taz Country. Participants must have a Texas driver's license to enter. Events will include a draw on Thursday (\$30 entry), pro (\$150) and amateur (\$80) doubles on Friday, pro (\$100) and amateur (\$50) singles on Saturday, and a draw (\$30) on Sunday. A \$15 registration fee will be charged. Pros and O's may not draw each other in either draw event.

Watch upcoming issues for further information or contact Ron or Debbie Bowers, 512-835-7256 or e-mail: ronbowers@jump.net

Florida

7TH ANNUAL FLORIDA OPEN, SNUGGERY BAR & GRILL, PALM BEACH GARDENS, MARCH 17-19

From Marty Allen: Well, partners, it's shaping up for another showdown at our 7th Annual Florida Open. We have sent out a "Wanted" poster for you

sharpshooters and fast draw artists to come down and try to capture the Florida Open. Fair warning: I believe the Florida players will win out this year, so just be prepared for an "also ran" finish. O.K., so I've been wrong in the past, but how about the law of average?

There is a good possibility of having four boards for this tournament. We should know by mid-February. Lodging group rate is \$69 at Inns of America, but we will keep trying.

For further information, please contact me at 561-697-9677 any morning. Please see our flyer in this issue of The Board Talk and share it with your shuffling friends.

Retiring NSHF President Reviews Past, Looks Ahead...

By Glen Davidson

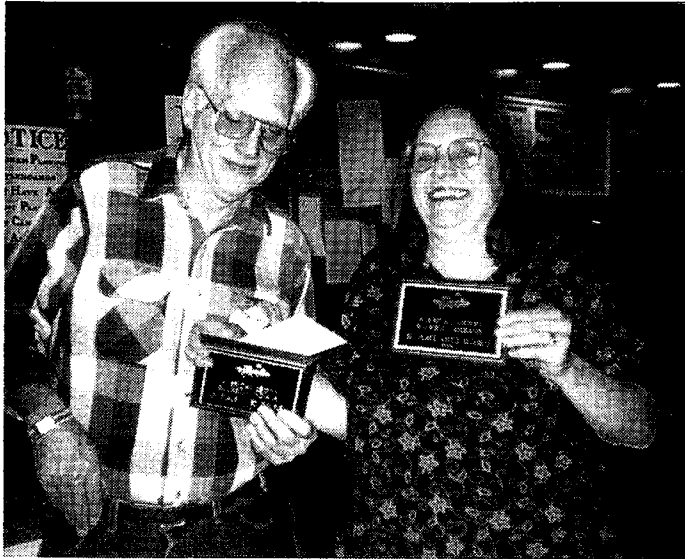
The "changing of the guard" of the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame took place at the Houston Holiday Open on Dec. 26, 1999. Director Bob Hunt was the first NSHF speaker. New director, Harvey Kidd, as usual, did a great job not only of auctioneering, but also Master of Ceremonies. He also encouraged the Texas Hall of Fame Committee to induct Ron and Debbie Bowers. I read the names of all the people who have been inducted into the National Hall since it was formed:

Bob Miles, Oklahoma/California
Earl Kelly, Texas
Mickey Mickens, New Jersey
PeeWee Ramos, California
Sol Lipkin, New Jersey
Glen Davidson, Oklahoma
Bill Melton, Oklahoma
Jim Foran, Washington
George & Donna Wilber, Michigan
Billy Chiles, California
Denny Busch, Nebraska
Joe Abraham, Illinois
Galen Gauce, Oregon
Rod Cameron, Texas
Ray Hartman, Oklahoma
Joanie Millar, Canada
Porter White, California

New NSHF president, Don Valk, said his goals are fund-raising, corporate sponsors, improving induction ceremonies, and seeking to find the Hall that we all want. He will be contacting all the directors with his plan in the near future. Lynda French is anxious to get started as the new NSHF secretary and says she will improve the NSHF on
(continued on Page 8)

Jim and Vicki Tops at Bourbon's Mixed Doubles

The American Legion 424 in Bourbon, Indiana, hosted a mixed doubles tournament on Dec. 18, with 16 teams participating.



Jim Long and Vicki Morgan were winners of the Bourbon mixed doubles.



Nancy Ross and Gary Neff took second place honors.

Up Next at Bourbon....

Feb. 19: Mixed Doubles

March 4-5: 2nd Annual Doubles Round Robin

For information, call American Legion,
219-342-8100,
or Terry Dowell, 219-353-1070



Third place was taken by Missie Ruppe and Jim Hartung.

Koontz/Kinsey Win Bourbon's Winter Doubles

Seventeen teams competed in the Winter Doubles at the American Legion 424 in Bourbon, Indiana, on Jan. 8.



The winners were Dennis Kinsey (left) and Mike Koontz.



Happy with their second place finish were Larry Brown and Dave Boaz.

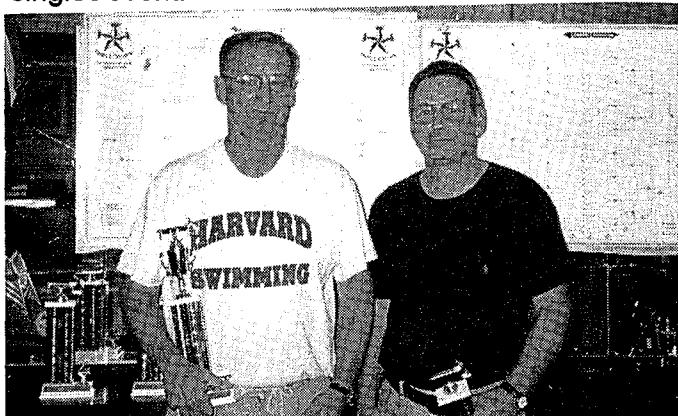
The Massie Brothers took third, with Mary Brown and Bill Niswonger in fourth place.

New Faces in Winner's Circle at Pillars Fall Shootout

By Dan Miner

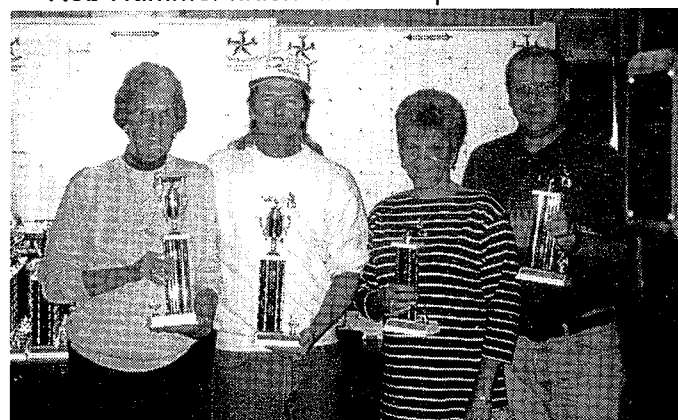
With a few less participants and a little cooler weather than we had for our July tournament, we ended the weekend with a few new names in the winner's circle at the Pillars' Fall Shootout in Guilford, New York.

Friday night started with 16 people entering the singles event.



Dennis Leehive of New Jersey (left) took top honors, with John Canino of New York in second place.

Rob Hummer finished in third place.



Taking first in Saturday morning's mixed doubles were relatively new to the tournament scene duo of Mike Howerton and Pauline Rock (left) of Riverside Tavern, Keeseville. Linda Meyer and John Arndt took second place.

In Saturday afternoon's draw partner event, Sharon Canino and G.H. Richardson took home the biggest share of the pot and first place honors. John Arndt and Dennis Leehive both got their second dip in the money by taking second place.

Sunday afternoon was the bring partner event, with the Jersey connection of Big Ken VanZile and Dennis Leehive snatching first place away from the love connection of John and Sharon Canino.



Draw partner winners G.H. Richardson and Sharon Canino, with John Arndt and Dennis Leehive taking second place.



Ken VanZile and Dennis Leehive, first place winners in the bring partner, with John and Sharon Canino, second place.

Thanks to our host and owner of Pillars, Chris Klugh, and everyone who gave a helping hand.

One last note from our MVP of the weekend, Dennis Leehive: "This is where the Big Boys come to play."



**Special
Valentine's Feature
"Shuffleboard
Sweethearts 2000"**

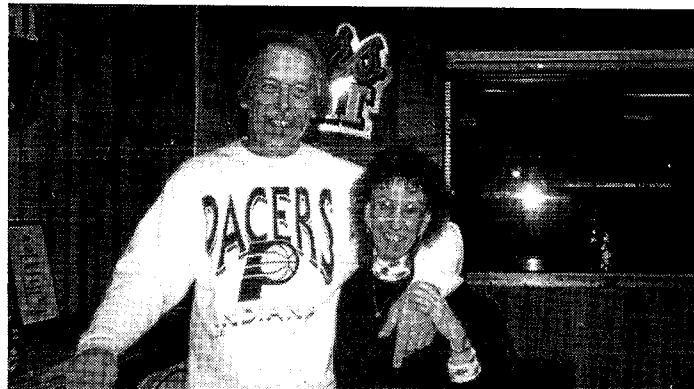
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McLeod/Collins Winners at Lucky's Tavern

Lucky's Tavern, North Webster, Indiana, hosted its first annual Hawkeye Memorial Tournament on New Year's Day. Owner Carol Westerman says she plans to make this event, in memory of Larry "Hawkeye" Weeks, an annual affair.



Winners were Shannon McCleod and Brian Collins.



Runners-up were Mary and Larry Brown.

A good crowd enjoyed the action on the boards, a fish fry, and entertainment.

Hamilton/Ingram Tops at Palace Bar Doubles

The Palace Bar in Fairmount, Indiana, hosted a doubles on Nov. 20, with 14 teams competing for a share of the over \$2,000 pot.



Coming out on top was the team of Jim "The Hammer" Hamilton, local Fairmount hero, and Glen Ingram, Muncie, Indiana.

Second place went to Larry Brown and the "Red Baron" Larry Creakbaum, with third going to Bud Esterline and Don Chapman of Fort Wayne.

The next event at the Palace Bar will be a doubles and singles on March 11-12. For information, call Bobby V, 765-948-9102.

NSHF Report *(continued from Page 5)*

the internet, along with her secretarial duties. Her goal is to "keep the president busy."

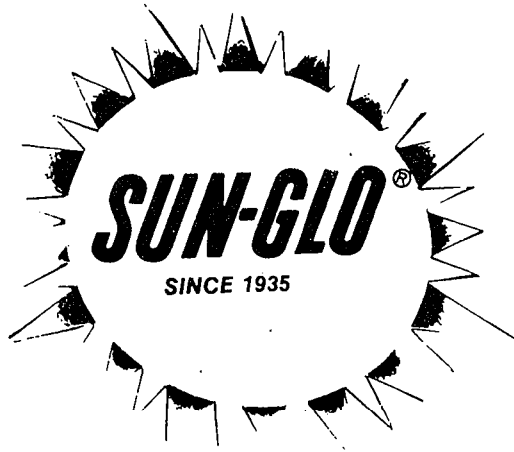
I would like to thank every one of the directors who helped me achieve what we have in the past five years. Bob Hunt did us all a good job as treasurer and as spokesperson at several inductions, and was there whenever I needed him. Vice President Hal Perry worked with Bob and was always close when we needed a vote. Larry Creakbaum was our spokesperson at several inductions and was always a willing volunteer. I'm proud to have worked with such a talented man and he taught me a lot. Jim Foran helped keep it going in the Northwest and after he retired, Dave Arndt took over his duties and has been a good spokesperson and worker. Frank Mako from that same area has been a welcome and hardworking member of the NSHF team. Louise Freer came in as secretary with a great deal of enthusiasm, helped us get it going, and also served as a spokesperson -- a great person to know.

Thanks to all of you for your volunteer efforts and also to the state committees which are a key to our overall goals.

I will continue to serve on the board as vice president for another year.

I am writing this from the home of Ron and Debbie Bowers, designers of the Bowers Rating System, most deserving of the lifetime achievement award for their dedication. It is in a beautiful setting on the edge of a hill, with a creek running through it. Debbie has her office and Ron has built an office for himself on the top and edge of the home he designed and built. I was pleased to be in Houston for the induction of Diana Hagen into the Texas Hall of Fame, the first woman in the USA to receive the honor as a great champion, a great player, and a great gal! Congratulations, Diana, long live the queen!

(Editor's Note: In addition to those Glen mentioned are new board members Al Salazar of Arizona and Ray Boyett of Florida. We look forward to working with all of them to reach their goals and encourage them to use The Board Talk to keep The World of Shuffleboard informed of their activities.)



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2000 CALENDAR OF SHUFFLEBOARD EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Feb. 11-13

Sweetheart Tournament
The Blue Goose
Port Orchard, Washington

Feb. 11-13

Sweetheart Tournament
Action Lounge
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

Feb. 18-20

4th Annual Saginaw Open
M.J. McCabe's Food & Spirits
Saginaw, Michigan

Feb. 18-19

Mason-Dixon Classic
Harvey's Place
Street, Maryland

Feb. 19

Mixed Doubles
American Legion Post 424
Bourbon, Indiana

Feb. 19

A-B Draw
Triple Crown Sports Bar
Houston, Texas

Feb. 26-27

Masters 2000
Fir Cone Tavern
Shelton, Washington

Feb. 26

Doubles
Sportsmans Lounge
Muncie, Indiana

MARCH

March 4-5

True Round Robin Doubles
American Legion 424
Bourbon, Indiana

March 10-12

4th Mother's Spring Fling
Mothers Pizza & Por Boys
Corpus Christi, Texas

March 11-12

Doubles & Singles
Palace Bar
Fairmount, Indiana

March 11

Mixed Doubles
Majestic Cafe
Pontiac, Michigan

March 17-18

8th Annual St. Pat's Tourney
Eagles Lodge 3911
Houston, Missouri

March 17-19

7th Annual Florida Open
Snuggery Bar & Grill
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

March 24-25

Spring Warm-Up
Harvey's Place
Street, Maryland

March 30-April 2

Texas State Championships
Taz Country
Austin, Texas

APRIL

April 8

Handicapped Singles
American Legion Post 424
Bourbon, Indiana

April 15-16

Spring Doubles & Singles
AMVETS Post 26
Pendleton, Indiana

April 14-16

Handicapped Tournament
American Legion Post 73
Del City, Oklahoma

April 20-23

Canadian Open
A.N.A.F. #68
Vancouver, B.C.

April 29

Open Doubles
Locker Bar
Marian, Indiana

April 29-30

Maryland State Championships
Harvey's Place
Street, Maryland

April 29-30

7th Annual Classic
BZ's Sports Bar & Grill
Burien, Washington

MAY

May 6

40th Annual Spring Doubles
American Legion Post 424
Bourbon, Indiana

May 26-29

Memorial Open
Location TBA
Houston, Texas

May 26-28

19th Memorial Extravaganza
The Season Ticket
Tacoma, Washington

JULY

July 2-8

Southwest Open
American Legion Post 73
Del City, Oklahoma

AUGUST

Aug. 18-19

2nd Round Robin Singles
American Legion Post 424
Bourbon, Indiana

OCTOBER

Oct. 6-8

Handicapped Tournament
American Legion Post 73
Del City, Oklahoma

Oct. 7

33rd Annual Fall Doubles
American Legion Post 424
Bourbon, Indiana

NOVEMBER

Nov. 11

Handicap Singles
American Legion Post 424
Bourbon, Indiana

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By Donna Wilber

Shuffleboard Sweethearts 2000

"I believe the weaker sex should certainly get involved in shuffleboard. They could make the sandwiches and serve refreshments at shuffleboard matches and do a very good job. They could even become a secretary of a shuffleboard league, knowing how much they like to gossip.....After playing for 35 years, I could certainly beat any female with one hand tied behind my back. Do you hear me, Billy Jean King?" -- The Bobby Riggs of Shuffleboard, Pennsylvania, January 1987

The World of Shuffleboard has changed during the past several years -- due, in large part, to the important role that women have played, locally, statewide and nationally. They have stepped out of the traditional niches where "Bobby Riggs" preferred them to stay and onto the "main stage" as active participants and worthy competitors in a previously male-dominated sport.

In honor of their achievements and their commitment to the growth of our sport, we salute four women representing those in the East, West, North and South, as Shuffleboard Sweethearts for the Year 2000.... We hope this "Shuffleboard Sweethearts" special will become an annual February tradition.

From the East....

RITA YANK

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

It was Rita Yank (aka "Billy Jean King") whose article in a 1986 issue of The Board Talk prompted "Bobby Riggs" to respond with his ideas for women's roles in shuffleboard. In her article, Rita encouraged some of the diehard male chauvinists who dominated the shuffleboard scene in her part of the country to give women shufflers who had invested the same time, effort and dedication as they did, respect and recognition. *"When a female*

shoots a male...he becomes amazed that she can shoot, shocked that she knows the game, embarrassed when she beats him and mad because it was done by a woman," she said.

According to Rita, there was no reason for all-male or all-female shuffleboard leagues. She also challenged the women to *demand* respect and recognition. "When these male shooters realize that shuffleboard is for both sexes, that is when we females will get the proper respect and recognition we deserve," she said. In other words, she was nudging the "Little Miss Muffets to get off their tuffets" and take their rightful place in The World of Shuffleboard.

When this was published back in 1986, Rita was not a novice. She had eight years of experience during which she was an essential part of five division championship teams, had shot in all-star tournaments, and had received the most votes for her league's "Most Valuable Player." She had travelled to Michigan in 1985 for the 1st Board Talk Shufflers' Reunion and took second in the women's singles and second in the 4-person team event. Still, she felt like Rodney Dangerfield: "I don't get no respect."

One male shuffler who gave her (and other women shufflers) respect, support and encouragement, was her husband Jim, the first inductee into the Pennsylvania Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. He was proud when the male players in the Northeast changed their assessment of Rita as "just a girl" to a "darn good player." Jim was her teacher, along with local player Jim Camp, when she started playing in 1977. The couple shares the philosophy that all shufflers have the responsibility to teach others what they know about the sport to ensure its future growth.

Together, Rita and Jim started a new program at J & C's Tavern in West Philadelphia. The program's success was its simplicity: teach the basics of the game to new shooters and they, in turn, had to do the same. She continued this program by moving around to different leagues, teaching new players what she had learned. Rita has contributed to the

growth and direction of no less than seven leagues in the Philadelphia area.



While she was the one who issued the call for equality in shuffleboard, Rita (right) is not a "women's libber." No one was more proud than she of husband Jim's (center) induction into the Pennsylvania Hall of Fame. She's also proud Mom to Jean and Jim Jr., who shares his parent's passion for shuffleboard.

In 1995 Rita took on one of her biggest challenges as captain of the newly-formed J & C's "B" team. It is standard practice in the Eastern Delco League to place all new teams in the "C" division to allow unseasoned teams to establish themselves and then work their way up to the stiffer competition of the higher divisions. Rita asked the league to allow her team to be placed in the "B" division because she wanted her players to face the tougher competition from the start. Her leadership transformed a young, unseasoned team into one of the strongest teams in the league. Last year her team swept the "B" division and finished with the second best record in the league. This year her team was awarded "A" division status and is now vying for first place. She is one of two women on the team, but doesn't hesitate to assert her authority when necessary to maintain her team's integrity.

Another big challenge Rita has addressed was getting a league (which in the '90s played by the '60s rules of 21-point games, etc.) to accept the changes the rest of the country had years before.

According to Louise Freer, a Philadelphia-area player who has earned national respect: "Rita and some other women paved the way for those of us who came later and made it easier for us to compete as equals in whatever events we choose. She is a worthy role model for women in the game of shuffleboard. More importantly, she is a worthy role model for ALL shuffleboard players."



From the West.... JOLENE LEMBKE Yucaipa, California

Back in the late '50s, Jolene Lembke was not thinking about shuffleboard. She was thinking about how to raise two babies alone after her husband left her with no support. A family friend, aware of her dire situation, gave her a job at his Driftwood Tavern in San Bernardino, California. The Driftwood was a shuffleboard hot spot at that time and Jolene would fill in if someone needed a partner -- if they were willing to wait while she took care of her customers. A lot of the big-name players passed through the Driftwood, such as Glen Davidson, Bob Miles, Al Stewart, and a local newcomer by the name of Billy Chiles (all four now in the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame).

In the mid-'60s, Jolene started working for a tavern called The Head Hunters. With the connections she had developed, she formed a team that none of the other taverns could match and she earned the unofficial title of "The best lady player around." The '70s brought some lean years to shuffleboard with pool becoming the number one bar sport.

By the time The Board Talk came onto the scene in 1984, Jolene was married to Roy Lembke of Oregon who was a pretty fair player himself. They bought a motor home and started travelling to tournaments promoted in the new publication. And Jolene, along with her brother Woodie Cochrum of Missouri, became the very first Board Talk reporters. Jolene took her reporter responsibilities seriously. She wore a jacket proclaiming "I read it in The Board Talk" and as a birthday present, Roy gave her business cards identifying her as a Board Talk reporter. From every tournament in every state they travelled, there would be new subscribers in the mailbox.

So, what does one classy female shuffler who had earned the title of "best lady player around" in the '60s do as shuffleboard enters the New Millennium? Retire? Not a chance! Jolene is not only still an active player in, and promoter of, tournaments in her area, she also serves as president of the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame, which has been the "model" for state committees throughout the nation. In this latest, and perhaps most important role, she rules with an iron velvet glove, determined that only those most deserving will gain entry into that special place.

(continued on Page 14)

"Sweethearts" *(continued from Page 13)*



Jolene was recently honored by her peers with a presentation of the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame official flag.



Jolene's first induction ceremony was a pleasure for her as she welcomed Al Stewart, a real "sweetheart," as the first inductee into the California Hall of Fame. Appropriately, it took place two years ago on Valentine's Day.



From the South...
DIANA HAGEN
Houston, Texas

The word "professional" and the name Diana Hagen have become synonymous in The World of Shuffleboard. But it hasn't always been that way....Back in the mid-'80s, nobody at Duane's Ice House in Houston wanted to draw her as a partner because she was still learning the game. So her teacher and mentor, Howard Mouton, told everyone he would take the "girl." She played against such heavy-weights as Mickey Baugh, Dale Koteris, Bill Brady, Rod Cameron and "Little Ray," and started winning those draws more often. The regulars started thinking twice about letting Howard take her for a partner. By late 1986, Diana was the lone woman in The Board Talk's Top 20 Players in the U.S.A. In 1987, she and Chris Monahan Danke of California took on the "big boys" (Darrol Nelson, John McDermott,

Glen Davidson and Billy Chiles) at the Michigan Open and took third place in the open doubles. In 1989, she broke the mold again when she and partner, Sam Summers of Oklahoma, won the open doubles at the Great Arizona Open, a highlight of her then relatively short career.

After several years in the late '80s and early '90s, when Diana dominated the women's division at PCSA and Shuffleboard Federation tournaments in Las Vegas and Reno, she was upgraded to "Pro" status. The "girl" was now in demand as a partner and she and the "master" himself, Darrol Nelson of Oregon, took second place honors at the 1997 North American Championships pro doubles. At the same event, she led her team to first place in the Pro-Am.

She continued to show her leadership qualities by taking her Pro-Am draft team and Deuces Wild team to first place honors at the 1998 NASC. At the 1999 NASC, she and fellow Texan, Brenda Moore, took third place in the open doubles and as the lone woman in the pro singles event, Diana made a strong bid to become a "first" in shuffleboard history and finally settled for third. She will keep trying.

Like the other "Shuffleboard Sweetheart" representatives, Diana is a promoter of the game, urging locals to get out and play, and using patience, time and expertise with new players to lead them down the right learning path. She participates in all the major tournaments and is a major factor in assuring healthy sponsor sale pots. The last few years, she has been a key figure in the Houston Holiday Open, which has become one of the highlights of the shuffleboard year for players across the country.

It was at the 1999 Houston Holiday Open that Diana reached her highest achievement to date: induction into the Texas Shuffleboard Hall of Fame.

Brian Walker of Texas summed up the achievements of Diana Hagen: "She has been an inspiration to many women, not only in the Houston area, but across the United States. I can honestly say that Diana is not only the best woman to ever play, but one of the best players in the country -- period!"

One of Diane's early partners, the late, great Hall of Famer Earl Kelly.





From the North....
MARIE SWEENEY
Lake Orion, Michigan

This photo of Marie Sweeney, back in the early '80s when she won the Tri-State (Michigan, Indiana, Ohio) Women's Singles Championship, captures her "winning isn't everything, but it sure is nice" personality. At that time, Marie was already a shuffleboard veteran, not just as a player but a promoter of many tournaments at the Wagon Wheel in Lake Orion, Michigan -- even before The Board Talk was "born." Great competition and warm hospitality were guaranteed and the motels in that small town had a lot of "no vacancy" signs out at tournament times. But, through the years, Marie always found room in her apartment next door to the Wagon Wheel for shufflers who had no place to stay. Many shufflers will testify that she had a heart that was bigger than her home, where the "welcome" sign was always out.

By 1987, Marie had won her spot on The Board Talk's Top 10 Women Players in the U.S.A. Partners for mixed doubles events were never a problem for Marie and she consistently collected trophies with the likes of such "toughies" as Lee McDonald, Rick Boyer, and Jerry Hershman in state championships and Board Talk tournaments in the '80s and '90s. At the same time, she was frequently in the winner's circle for the women's singles events at those same tournaments and other local and state tournaments.



Just two of Marie's winning partners were Jerry Hershman (left) and Rick Boyer.

There was a "void" at the 1999 State Championships at the Club Car Lounge in Durand, Michigan, last Thanksgiving weekend. The highly-respected and much-loved Marie Sweeney was at home, facing the biggest battle of her life -- on or off the boards -- and her formidable opponent was Cancer. She is currently undergoing intensive chemo-therapy.

We hope Marie's "winning isn't everything, but it sure is nice" philosophy will see her through this latest challenge. May it be of some support to her in this difficult period to know that the entire World of Shuffleboard is rooting for her!

(Editor's Note: If you would like Marie to know that you're thinking of her, drop her a line at: 54 S. Broadway, Apt. 14, Lake Orion MI 48362.)

Special Thanks to....

As any writer will tell you, research is interesting, but time-consuming and, while not boring (considering these subjects), simply recorded words! We thank those who breathed "life" into our inadequate words by providing their insights into the lives of our four "Sweethearts of Shuffleboard."

Thanks to: Woodie Cockrum, Brian Walker, Jim Yank and Louise Freer. Thanks, also, to you "sneaky peekies" for keeping this a well-kept secret until the "Sweethearts" receive this issue in the mail!

If you have nominations for the year 2001 Sweethearts of Shuffleboard, feel free to send them to The Board Talk, 503 E. Sheridan Rd., Lansing, MI 48906.

Congratulations, 2000 Sweethearts! You serve as role models for us all.... Each of you, and the women you represent, are vital to the future of shuffleboard.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PHOTO CONTRIBUTORS...

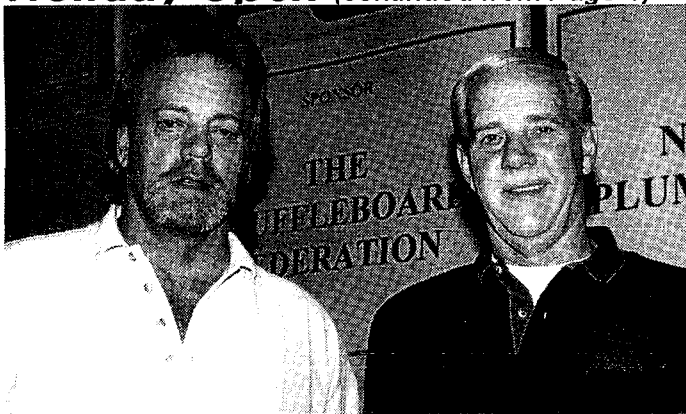
We have requested many times in past issues for photo contributors to PLEASE not use black markers on the back of their photos for subject identifications. When you do so, the black ink bleeds onto the photos, making dots on the faces of the subjects which cannot be removed without erasing the images of the photos.

We had several this month that we could not use because of that problem. To have their photos in The Board Talk and recognized by shufflers across the nation is very important to winners and they will be disappointed when their pictures are not included.

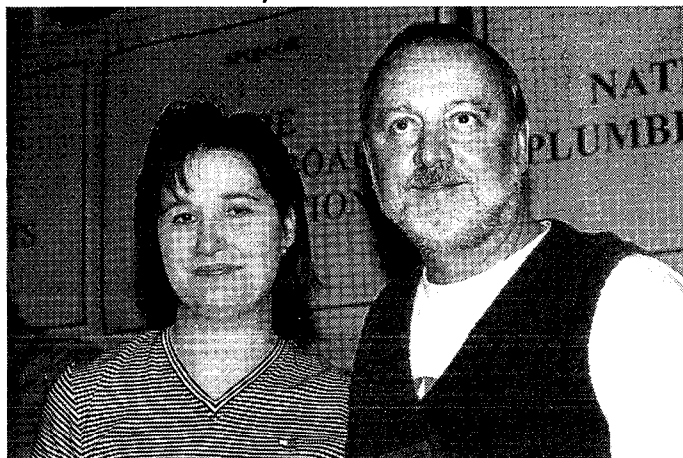
To address that challenge, we suggest you use the economical "post-it" notes on the back of your photos.

George & Donna Wilber, Publishers
 The Board Talk

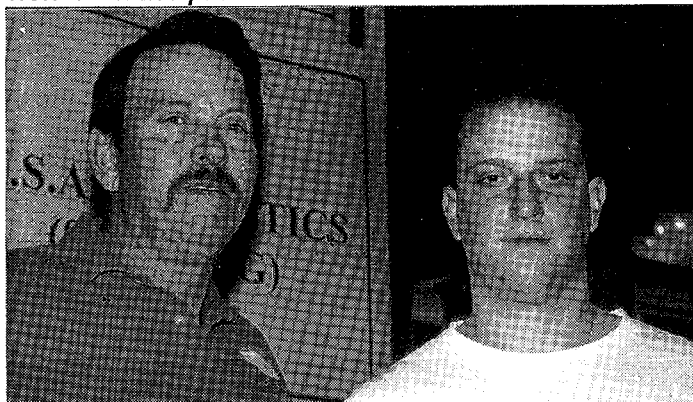
Holiday Open *(continued from Page 1)*



Stan Stinson (left) and Johnny Wayne Crawford were winners of the pro-am draw.



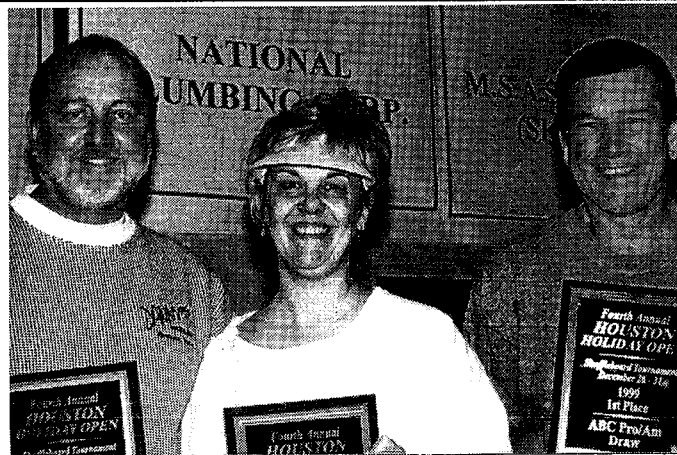
Jeri Billard and Danny Norris took second place honors in the pro-am.



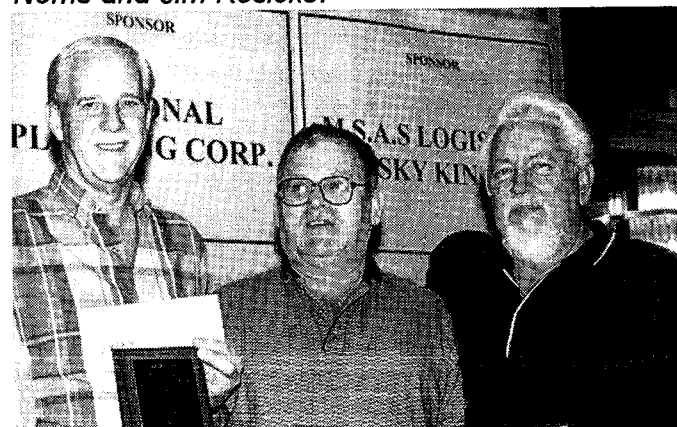
Mahlon Nobles (left) and Mitch Melton finished third in the pro-am.



Chuck Leach, with his partner "JT" Thames, took first place in the amateur draw. (Editor's Note: The flu bug struck during the Holiday Open and some players were confined to their beds when photos were taken.)



Winners of the ABC event were Gwyn Orsi, Danny Norris and Jim Kosicke.



Johnny Wayne Crawford, Pete Worsnop, and Jim Coulter took second place.

Day Three was four-person team day, with pro-am and amateur events. On the pro side, the team of Fred Johns, Gary Thompson and Mike Keevil of Washington and Hall of Famer Glen Davidson from "all over" completed the event undefeated but chose to split 60/40 with a Houston team led by Diana Hagen, with Marshall Partlow, Tom Milan, and John Szinski, who were declared the runners-up. David Williams of Ft. Worth led Jeri Billard, Steve Walker of Cushing, Oklahoma, and Kathy Keevil of Tacoma, Washington, to a third place finish.

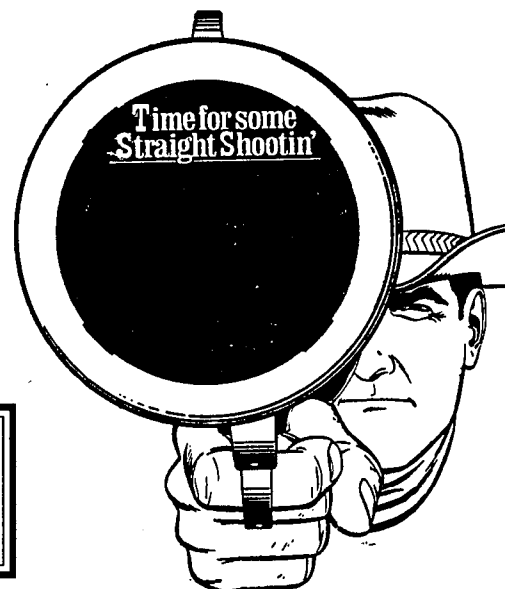


First and second place pro-am team members (from left): Gary Thompson, Fred Johns, Marshall Partlow, Diana Hagen, Glen Davidson, Mike Keevil, John Szinski. Not pictured: Tom Milan.

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☞ Saturday, March 18, 11 a.m.: Bring Partner Doubles,
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☞ Sunday, March 19, 11 a.m.: Open Singles, \$50 entry

*All events 15 points, single game, double elimination – Sponsor Sales prior to all events.
–One-time \$10 registration fee per player–*

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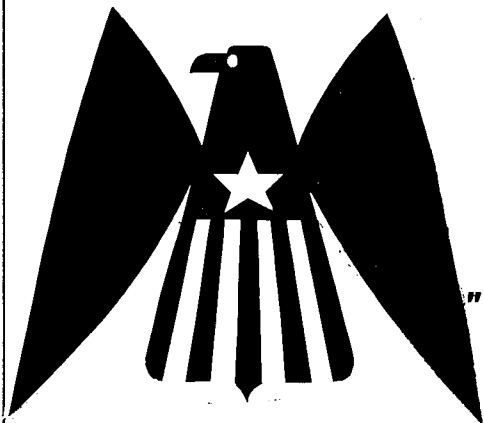
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MAY 26-27-28, 2000

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

●Friday, 7 p.m.: A/B DRAW

Negative spot handicap, \$10 entry, 15 pt. single elimination

●Saturday, 10 a.m.: A/B/C DRAW

*Negative spot handicap, \$25 entry, 2 out of 3 Winners,
21 pt. losers*

●Sunday, 10 a.m.: A DOUBLES (.00 TEAM TOTAL)

\$100 per team

B DOUBLES (4.5 TEAM TOTAL)

\$50 per team

2 out of 3 Winners, 21 pt. Losers

BOWERS RATING SYSTEM TO BE USED

Team totals calculated by exact decimal rating

--8 BOARDS!--

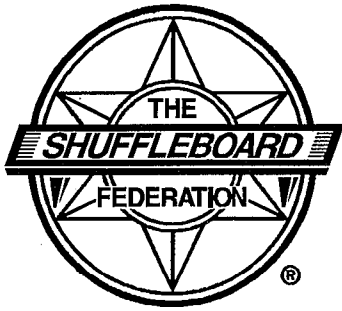
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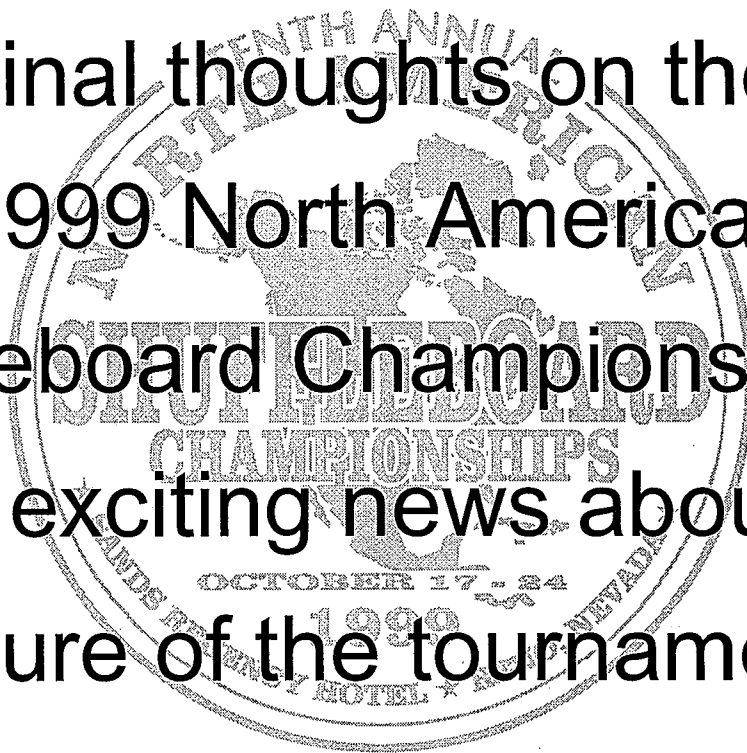
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"FRIENDSHIP THROUGH COMPETITION"



Final thoughts on the
1999 North American
Shuffleboard Championships™
and exciting news about the
future of the tournament



Thanks to everyone who attended the 10th annual North American Shuffleboard Championships™, and to all of the dedicated members of our tournament staff that make this event possible.

Of the many hundreds of players who have attended this tournament over the years, including the 268 who played in 1999, eight have been there every year. They are Rick Boyer, Jim Filkins, Bob Hunt, Bill Meyer, Bill Melton, Al Salazar, Bob Shaw and David Williams. We very much appreciate your continued support and hope to see all of you at the next ten as well.

While there were many highlights, there were also some problems, the most important of which were the boards. They did not play up to our standards or to a level fitting a tournament of this stature. This was certainly not due to any lack of effort. We apologize to all the participants and want to assure everyone that appropriate action has been taken to insure that this is not an issue in the future.

Before going any further we want to say that this is not a reflection on the quality of the tables we used, but rather a consequence of the Nevada climate. Those same tables play just fine in their home, American Legion Post 73, Del City, Oklahoma.

We shall always be grateful to Don Crall, who rented us his boards for the last three years. Without his help, it is quite possible the NASC™ would not have survived. If you have never been to the Legion for the Southwest Open, or one of their other tournaments, we highly recommend you visit them.

The NASC™ has become the tournament it is largely due to the excellent work of our tournament staff. Five days before the start of the tournament, Harvey Walden arrived with his all important cargo of twenty-four shuffleboard tables. The next day, the core of our setup team began the setup process. That group, which includes Rick Boyer, Lyndon Baize, Kory Hungerford and Scott Harrington play a major role all week. In addition to set up and take down, they wax and adjust boards for eight straight days in between, and don't get much of a break until the boards have been safely packed back into the truck.

Once the boards are in place, there is a substantial amount of preparation still to be done, including leveling, cleaning and polishing. That's when Bubba Warren, Lou Decker and Ted Fowler join the crew. Caring for the boards is not a task that ends once the tournament starts. Most mornings, by 6:00 a.m., members of the tournament staff were back at it, cleaning, polishing and spraying the boards, vacuuming the gutters and doing additional leveling and adjusting.

It's now the day before the start of the tournament and Kathy Yingst is now on hand and working on some of the many details, including preparing auction lists, taking late entries, organizing teams. Once the tournament has started she moves on to posting prize money, calculating points for the North American Champion Contest, etc.

Sunday arrives and the rest of the team is in place. Bracket man Rob Kern is set to record the first of nearly 1,000 tournament games. Sharon Huddleston is ready for the very important job of handling the auctions and splitting up the prize money into hundreds of envelopes. Our new auctioneer, Jack Davis is ready for the first of more than 400 players/teams he will handle for the week.

As the action begins, tournament photographer Ralph Duarte and video expert Jim Martin are capturing all the highlights, recording eighteen hours of video along with taking more than 500 photos.

In addition to the regular tournament staff were some volunteers, who play an important and appreciated role. We wish to recognize Carol Boyett, Vickie Hunt, Bob Jacobsen, Debbie Kern, Nancy Salazar, Gordie Smith and Tina Wade. So many people stop and offer to help out if we need them, we appreciate all of you and hope we haven't missed anyone.

As usual, our Co-Sponsors played an important role in funding the nearly \$24,000.00 in tournament expenses. Thanks to everyone who made a Co-Sponsor contribution, especially our first Platinum Sponsor, Hal Perry, who made a \$1,000.00 donation. Special thanks also to our board sponsors, American Shuffleboard Company, Hillside, New Jersey, The Houston Holiday Open and the Southwest Open, all of which made a donation of \$300.00 to Co-Sponsor a board.

Of the many highlights, the Crazy Eights event was probably number 1. The crowd participation was unlike any we have ever seen. We will work on expanding that for the 2000 Tournament. It was also great to have our first Canadian winner of a singles event, Kabal Bimb.

Looking to next year, the 2000 NASC™ will include our first experiment with a two out of three winners bracket and 21 point game losers bracket. As promised, one of the amateur singles or doubles event will have that format. We will expand that format to other divisions as we get a handle on how it affects the time requirements.

Thanks again to everyone. We hope you are all as excited as we are about the new sponsorship agreement with the Sands, the 24 new boards and the future of the NASC™.

\$150,000.00 - SEVEN YEARS THE SHUFFLEBOARD FEDERATION & SANDS REGENCY HOTEL CASINO AGREE ON NEW NASC™ DEAL

11TH ANNUAL NORTH AMERICAN SHUFFLEBOARD CHAMPIONSHIPS™

OCTOBER 29 - NOVEMBER 5, 2000

24 BRAND NEW CUSTOM MADE SHUFFLEBOARD TABLES

The Sands Regency Hotel has pledged up to \$150,000.00 to host the North American Shuffleboard Championships through 2006. Nearly half of that money will be used to purchase 24 brand new shuffleboard tables, with the remainder coming in the form of added money, some of which is based on attendance. The most significant feature of the new boards are the playing surfaces, which will have a synthetic laquer finish. If ten years of running the NASC™ has taught us anything, it is that boards with playing surfaces that have a plastic finish are just not the right equipment for the dry Nevada climate. The lacquer finish will make the boards much easier to adjust and give them a more traditional look and feel.

It has always been our goal that the NASC™ be the premier shuffleboard tournament in the world in all respects. We have worked very hard to run a first class tournament in an effort to achieve that goal. Until now, securing the tables every year and trying to get them adjusted to play well has been the toughest, most expensive part of the operation. Having twenty four custom made shuffleboard tables will allow us to elevate the quality of this tournament to a new level. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to Sol Lipkin for all his help in putting this deal together.

As preparations for the 2000 NASC™ continue, we welcome any suggestions you may have. The success of the NASC™ has come through working to improve the tournament every year and by listening to our participants. We appreciate the support and commitment of the Sands Regency Hotel Casino, which stuck with us in the lean years, and look forward to working with them for many years to come. We hope the shuffleboard community will show their support for their huge new sponsorship commitment with a record turnout for the 2000 NASC™. Stay tuned to The Board Talk for all the latest news and information.

Cherish the memories of the NASC™
with a commemorative video.

Embroidered Jackets also available.

Order Form			
Item	Price	Quantity	Total
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1998 NASC™ Commemorative Video (2 Hours)	24.95		
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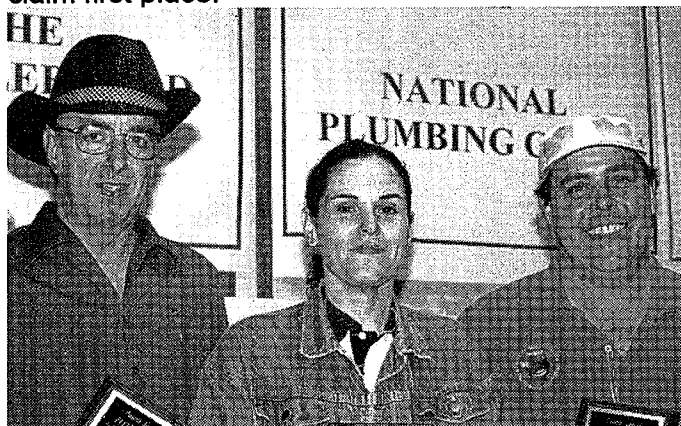
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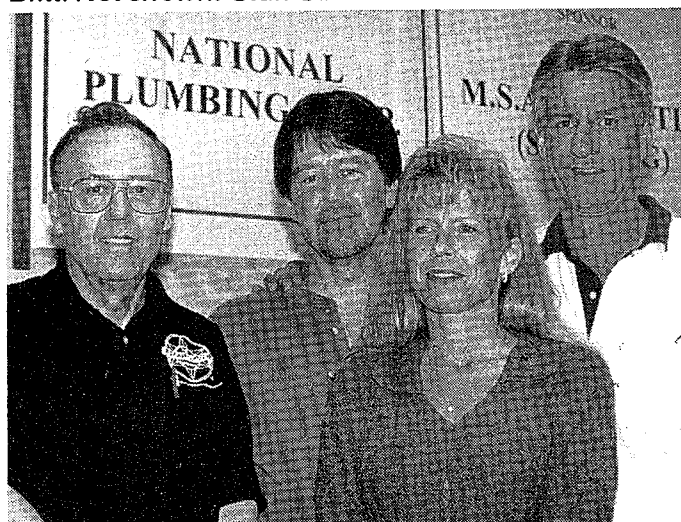
Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Please send to The Shuffleboard Federation, 21476 Lujon Court, Northville, Michigan, 48167 and allow four to six weeks for delivery.

The amateur side paid four places with 17 teams competing. The Houston team of Ann Walker, Sylvia Martinez, "Super" Dave Ramold, and Donnie Garner held off the challenge of Stan Stinson and Jimmie ("Rhubarb") Britt of Houston, Neil Garvin of Corpus Christi and Chris Clayton of Houston to claim first place.



Challengers Neil Garvin, Chris Clayton and Jimmie Britt. Not shown: Stan Stinson



Gary and Kay Nelson and Jack Davis, all of Dallas-Ft. Worth, and David Veasey (left) from North Texas took third.

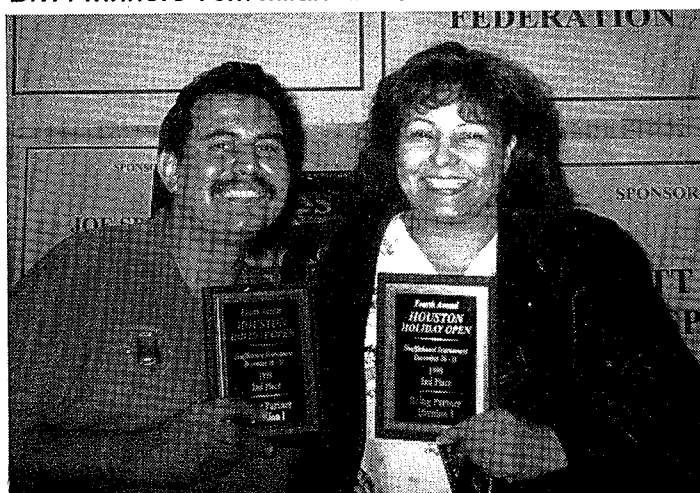
Frank Mako from Washington, Dallasite Jeff Womble, and Sue and Len Webster of Omaha claimed fourth place.

Day Four featured the bring partner events with a pro-am (add to 0), amateur Div. I (add to 4) and Div. II (add to 6). In the pro event, Dale Williams and Howard Mouton bested the teams of Sally Goff of Tulsa and Steve Walker of Cushing, Oklahoma, Mike Baker of Houston and Bob Shaw of Dallas for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places, respectively.

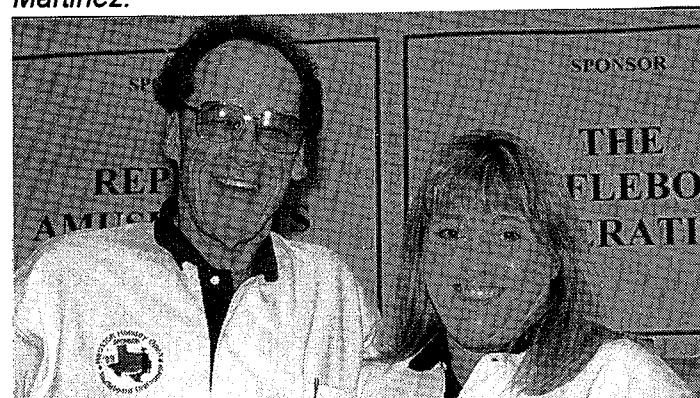
Div. I saw Houstonian Tom Milan team with Jeff Womble of Dallas to take first place, edging out local players Sylvia Martinez and Jorge Galvan, who finished second.



Div. I winners Tom Milan and Jeff Womble.



Second place honors to Jorge Galvan and Sylvia Martinez.



Houston area players Rene Roberts and Ken ("Doc") Strong claimed third.

Linda and Mahlon Nobles of Dallas came in fourth. The Div. II results showed that the "Jims" have it -- Jim Payne and Jim Kosicke, that is, first-place winners. Gary Thompson and Mike Keevil of Washington claimed second, while locals Frank Huffman and Mahlon ("Sky King") Moore took third. Jeanine Carmack and Pete Worsnop claimed fourth, while the teams of Jeff ("The Rock") Clark and David

(continued on Page 24)

Frisco Eddie's Revenge: The Return

A Series by Balboa Ron Schweikert

(Editor's Note: In last month's episode, Eddie and Lil were playing their final game, the game which would determine who would claim the crown for the pro singles championship in Reno. Lil had the winning weight on the board and it was Eddie's hammer.)

Eddie's weight appeared that it was going off the board for sure after tapping Lil's 1 into a deuce. It continued on...into the g....glossy little "half moon" area, deep in the three zone. The board was glossy in that small area -- simply because there was no wax on it! Eddie's hammer came to a complete stop with the edge of his weight hanging barely into the four zone. In that one brief moment, Frisco Eddie became the American Federation National Champion!

Eddie immediately raised his clenched fist into the victory sign and shouted out a loud "YES"! Surprisingly enough, Lil (without requesting an inquiry) just walked down to the other end of the table to collect her weights. There was no hug, or even a handshake, offered on her part to either Eddie or Shelli! To everyone's surprise, she just collected her weights and quietly left the room.

There were plenty of hugs and kisses when Shelli and Eddie ran to meet each other at the center of the board. There was also a great many congratulations and celebrating going on in that room. Eddie would be a very popular champion indeed!

The celebration spilled down into the casino room main bar, and lasted for quite a while. After 20 minutes or so had passed, though, Eddie whispered into Shelli's ear: "Why don't we just go upstairs now, Sweetheart, and finish this off in private. After all, in two days neither of us will be single anymore!" Shelli said that she just happened to be having the same thoughts. Another very important thought was racing through her mind as well. This would have to be the moment of truth. She would have to tell Eddie about the baby!

After they got to their room, Shelli waited until their foreplay had reached its peak, and then she gasped into his ear: "Wait, what a minute, Darling. There's something important I have to tell you!" Eddie replied: "Your timing is really off, Lover -- can't it wait?" "No, no, it can't, Precious. I have to confess something to you now!" was her reply.

They both pulled back slightly then, and looked deeply into each other's eyes. Shelli had thought

about this moment, and had decided to just tell the simple truth. She began by saying: "Eddie, I love you with all my heart. I'm going to tell you something now that I hope won't change any of our feelings for each other, or our plans." She drew a little closer then and said: "Honey, I'm going to have your...." Amazingly, Eddie interrupted at that point and said: "Shelli Darling -- what you really should say is...I'm going to have OUR baby!" They looked at each other in silence for some time then. Shelli was almost in a state of shock!

Shelli finally said: "Well, how did you know -- how could you?" Eddie replied: "Let's just say a 'bird' (meaning Lil) told me. O.K.?" He put his arms around her then and told her everything she had secretly been praying she would hear. It was all confirmed in both their minds when the most passionate lovemaking they ever had happen....happened!

Shelli was on cloud nine now. The wedding was on, Eddie was overjoyed, and was actually as anxious as she was to start a family. Everything seemed perfect! Perfection (at best) is a rather abstract term, though. Had Shelli opened the closed blinds of their room right then, she would have seen some clouds forming....some rather big clouds.

--TO BE CONTINUED--

What could those ominous clouds mean? Could they be related to Lil -- or something more sinister? Don't miss the next exciting episode.

Addition to "Play Your Way Across the U.S.A."

Please make this addition to the "Play Your Way Across the U.S.A." listing that was in last month's issue:

Texas: The Gold Nugget, 2602 West Division, Arlington; phone: 817-226-4029

If you are a new subscriber and didn't get the latest listing, we'll be happy to send you one. Call us at 517-371-2538, or e-mail: dgwilber@prodigy.net

Welcome to the Directory!

Please check out the Shuffleboard Directory and welcome a new listing: Rookies Bar, San Antonio, Texas. We encourage readers to patronize all of our advertisers. Without them, there would be no Board Talk!

Notebook *(continued from Page 2)*

tips and stories. The only down side was people started getting sick halfway through the week with the flu and colds.

Last, but certainly not least: Hey, Jimmy Britt -- how about them Huskers!!!

Sue Webster (aka Squiggy), Omaha, Nebraska

We talked with the Halsteads of Kentucky (among those who caught the bug) and they shared your sentiments about the Houston Holiday Open. We're sure Jack, Johnny B and the other organizers will appreciate your kind words. They invest a tremendous amount of hard work to make the Houston Holiday Open a success and positive feedback like yours makes it all worthwhile.

Shuffling in the Millennium at the Houston Holiday Open

Where were you at midnight on Dec. 31, 1999, when the clock struck 12 and we ushered in the Year 2000?

I was playing shuffleboard and partying with family and friends (old and new), thanks to the warmth and generous hospitality of the Houston Shuffleboard Community, who hosted one of the finest tournaments I have had the pleasure of attending. It doesn't get much better than this!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for making it the most memorable tournament to date. Thanks to Johnny Ballard and Jack Scott, along with their numerous helpers, who went out of their way to constantly make sure everything ran smoothly and that everyone was having a good time. It was paradise, where there was action 24 hours a day if you were so inclined (as I was).

My memories will be many as well as the new friendships formed. Much to my amazement and amusement, it was also a learning experience (some more costly than others). Not only did I learn a few new shuffleboard shots from Mike Keevil and Kim Andrews, but I now know how to play Texas Hold'em, thanks to Harvey Kidd, Billy Melton and numerous others, which turned out to be a lesson in giving and taking. From Diana Hagen, Jeri Billard and Linda Nobles, I learned that if you have a table, who needs a dance floor, and that Lilly Kidd has a heart as big as Texas. Last, but certainly not least, I learned that if you want to get a party started, you only need Kentucky (aka Mike Halstead) leading a conga line to the sounds of "Susie Q." Mary Koteris

proved she didn't need "Macarena" lessons and was the best of all the women on the dance floor until Johnny Wayne Crawford started strutting his stuff.

It was a real privilege to be in attendance for the induction of Diana Hagen to the Texas Shuffleboard Hall of Fame, which she modestly accepted to a standing ovation. I know that everyone in the shuffleboard world knows what Diana can do with a shuffleboard weight, but let me say what she does with a grapefruit and a cucumber was just as exciting to watch! And, if you aren't a believer, I know Glen Davidson has it all on tape and, for a big enough donation to the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame, you just might be able to purchase a copy.

These are but a few of my Millennium memories. To see it for yourself, you will have to attend next year's Houston Holiday Open New Year's Eve Party. I know I'll be back!!!!

Lorraine Bingham (aka Hurricane), Santa Clara, California

If the reactions of other participants are like those of Squiggy and Hurricane, the Houston Shuffleboard Community can look forward to hosting an even bigger delegation from The World of Shuffleboard!

Houston Holiday Open Scores Another Success!

With the last five days left in the year closing in and Y2K hovering over us like vultures, we are asking ourselves: "Do I store up water, cash and haul out the kerosene lamps?" After all, this could be...well, you know, "Armageddon"...the crashing of the universe as we know it! OR play shuffleboard at the Houston Open? Hmmm! Well, that took, what... four seconds to think about. Yeh, you guessed it: play the "S" game in "H" town. After all, if you had 10 seconds to live, wouldn't you rather be arched over a shuffleboard table, lifting a bew, and gazing at gorgeous girls doing the same? Of course!

This year was a little different. The women swooped down with the ease of a gazelle and teeth of a barracuda and sashayed to victory over the men in a majority of the events, snatching firsts or seconds. Could it be there is another "Great One" other than Johnny Wayne Crawford called the "Female Race"? Hey, it happens in other sports -- golf, pool, basketball. Women are competing in larger numbers, getting some of the attention.

(continued on Page 26)



BIG Hearts in Nebraska!

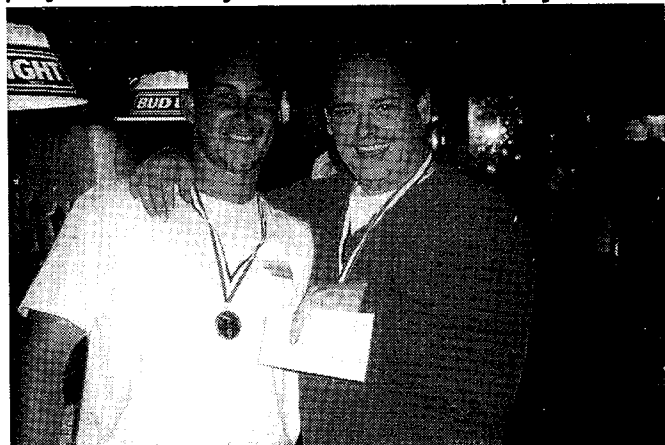
By Char Rahn

My Way Lounge in Omaha, Nebraska, was the place to be for another fundraiser. On Nov. 19-21, shufflers, friends and family

gathered to raise money for Kaci and Kim Merchen. Kaci, the 18-month-old daughter of Kim, was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic Leukemia. Kim has played league and local tournaments for many years. She hasn't played much the last two years, but always kept in touch with fellow shufflers.

We want to thank Kevin Higby, owner of My Way, and Harold (Junior) Neubanks of Harold's Bar (where we also played games on a third board) for hosting this tournament and fundraiser.

Action started Friday night with 32 teams participating in a single game, double elimination A-B draw. There were several players who hadn't played for a few years and some new players.



Winners were Rick Gilliland (left), first-year player, and Jay Watson.



Taking second place honors were Kevin Higby, My Way owner, and Jackie Jackson.

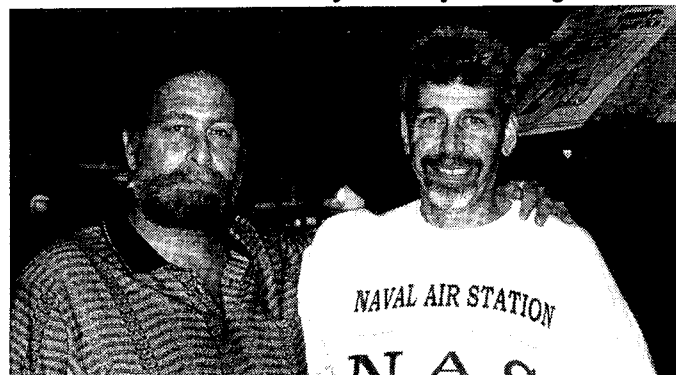
Finishing third was the team of Jim Payne and "Bring 'em Back" Bob Linder.



Dawn Simants and Scottie "Dog" Steinmyer took fourth place.

Harold "Junior" Neubanks and Linda Ritter, Art Busch and Don Zahm shared fifth and sixth places.

The bring partner event, also single game, double elimination, started Saturday evening with 36 teams and went until early Sunday morning.



When the air cleared, the winners were Tim Regan and Don Zahm.



The shy Kathi Lloyd, welcome visitor from Colorado, and Marty Shepard took second place.



Harold "Junior" Neubanks, owner of Harold's Bar, and Barb Zahm took third place.

Others in the winner's circle were: Bill Simants and Bill Frederick, 4th; Jim Payne and Mike Roach, Rick Klanderud and Bill Webber, 5th and 6th.

After the bring partner sale got started, we had a huge auction of many great items, including a diamond bracelet, an antique metal kid's car, food certificates, drawings by an artist, and so many different and wonderful items, we couldn't list all of them. Special thanks to John McDermott and The Shuffleboard Federation and Triple Crown of Omaha for the weights they donated. Thanks also to The Board Talk for the subscriptions they donated. A special thank you to Dan Bruggeman, Danielle's Dad, for the beautiful handmade wooden Nebraska weight case he made and donated. This item was hotly bid on by several players and went for the highest price of any item -- \$600! This shows that Nebraskans are big supporters of shuffleboard and Nebraska football. Jay Watson was the auctioneer again, but this time he didn't lose his voice. He did a great job, as always, and brought in lots of money. Thanks also to all the friends and businesses that donated great items and their time for a worthwhile cause.

We did not have a sponsor sale for the two tournaments, but one-half of prize money was donated to Kim and Kaci, as well as money donated by My Way and Harold's. With the donations, auctions and prize money, we collected **\$13,000 to help Kaci!**

Thanks to Don Zahm, Bill and Dru Frederick, Chuck and Cyndi Busch, Larry and Barb Zahm, Kevin Higby, Harold "Junior" Neubanks and everyone who helped with the tournament and the great food that was provided every day of the weekend.

It was fun seeing our friends from Colorado. We

knew Dennis Bird and Ron Sosovec were coming, but we were pleasantly surprised to have Kathi Lloyd, Candy Lepore and Don Garrison come into town, too.

The fun-loving Dennis Bird of Colorado took his dance act from the floor to the fireplace! (Now do you know where that prize-winning Reno team name came from: Five Over Easy and One Scrambled?)



Omaha shufflers have big hearts and came together for a worthwhile cause, and I'm proud to be associated with them and all shuffleboard players across the country!

(Editor's Note: AMEN!)

Something New: Vintage Car Giveaway at Spokane's Memorial Day Tourney

Put the creative minds of top shuffleboard players/promoters in Spokane, Washington, together and what do you get? Something unique like a vintage car giveaway at the 19th Annual Memorial Day Shuffleboard Extravaganza on May 26-28. Not only that -- but \$1,000 added dollars!

The big event, which will be played on eight boards, includes an A/B draw on Friday night, \$10 entry, 15 pt. single elimination; an A/B/C draw on Saturday, \$25 entry, 2 out of 3 in the winner's bracket, \$21 pt. game in the loser's bracket; an A doubles (.00 team total), \$100 per team; and a B doubles (4.5 team total), \$50 per team, on Sunday, both events 2 out of 3 in the winner's bracket, 21 pt. in the loser's bracket. Events will be finished daily.

Please share the enclosed flyer with your shuffling friends. If you have questions, call Dan Hitt or Melody Marine, 509-939-1134 or 483-7615, or the Season Ticket, 509-327-9790.

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More Notebook

Bonnie English Applauds Karl Spickelmier Induction

As soon as I receive my Board Talk, I flip through the pages to seek articles about the players I know. The headlines on Page 5 caught my attention immediately: Karl Spickelmier Inducted into California Hall of Fame. I want to say that it is of note that his rise to fame and glory began here in Colorado. I clearly remember the early days he refers to in 1969 as a beginning player at The Place in Denver. How heartening to read that he gives credit to Bill English at that time for helping him learn and love the game!

Bill always referred to Karl as a "real class act." He especially appreciated the fact that Karl had a great desire to become a very skilled, competitive player. He recognized that he had the talent, determination and ability to achieve these goals.

Through the years, Bill always looked forward to seeing Karl when he returned to Denver. He remembered that Karl arranged his vacation time so he could visit his mother who lived in Denver and be there with her during the holidays. Of course, Karl would also be playing shuffleboard while he was there. These visits meant a lot to Bill because Karl was definitely one of his favorite players and friends.

My congratulations to Karl for this much-deserved induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. I echo all the accolades about him that were featured in this article. I am so very proud and truly happy that he credits Bill as one of the people who inspired him along the way!

Bonnie English, Loveland, Colorado

We're pleased, too, Bonnie, that Karl paid tribute to Bill (first inductee into the Colorado Hall of Fame) as his teacher and mentor. You'll appreciate the following note....

Applause from Mike Roach...

I applaud the following...."Quote of the Month" (January 2000 issue) by Nick Chaffin:

".... The World of Shuffleboard would be (a lot) better off if we had (a lot) a few more Karl Spickelmiers."

Mike Roach, Omaha, Nebraska

More on the Houston Open

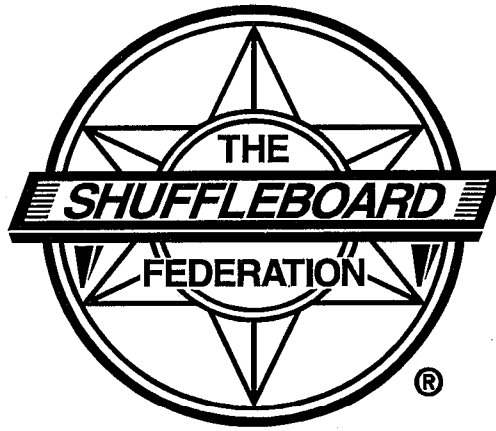
The new tournament facility, Greenspoint Marriott, was a better host than the previous hotel. The ballroom offered ample room for 16 boards with enough space between boards and generous seating capacity. The directors, Jack Scott and Johnny Ballard, were very hospitable and went out of their way to make sure everyone was being accommodated. The tournament events came off in good fashion and were handled efficiently. The volunteer staff did a great job of bracket board control, dust distribution, siliconging of boards, and prize and sale money presentation. Unfortunately, the boards, as a group, were hard to play and the dust was too slow. One other criticism was the selection of events. The ABC draw was not favored by a vast majority of the players in attendance. I heard many people mention that they would have much preferred a draft team event. But, overall, a very good tournament and grading from A to F, the Holiday Open should receive a B+.

Diana Hagen Inducted

During the Houston Holiday Open, Diana Hagen was inducted into the Texas Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. This was an honor bestowed upon a wonderful and deserving person who has been an inspiration to many who participate in our sport. I opened the ceremony with a brief history of our Hall of Fame and reviewed the members of that illustrious body. Being much better at delegating than speaking, I turned the program over to Brian Walker, who listed Diana's accomplishments and tournament victories, as well as her work with novice players in the Houston area. He told of how her home has the garage and one of her spare bedrooms lined with plaques from her many victories and how, when Brenda Moore would come to visit, Diane would put her in the plaque-filled bedroom as an intimidation ploy. Johnny Wayne Crawford then made the presentation and told a marvelous story of how a younger player had approached the great Billy Mays and stated that there were no really good lady players. After Billy told him how foolish he was, he said he thought of Diana as not being a woman, but simply being one of the 10 best players in the nation. Congratulations, Diana, a well-deserved honor!

Bobby Williams, Fort Worth, Texas

We know you will enjoy the article on Diana as one of our Shuffleboard Sweethearts 2000.



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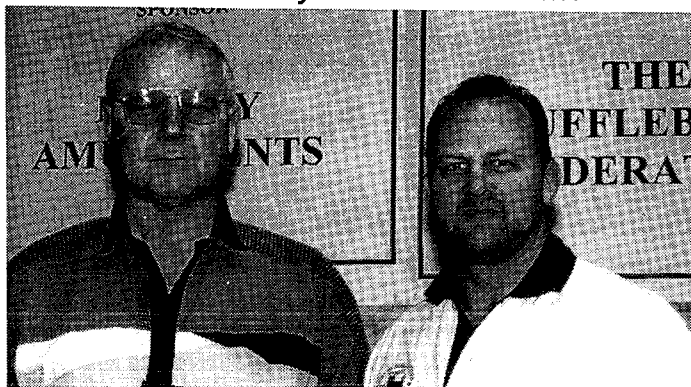
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Houston Holiday (cont. from Page 17)

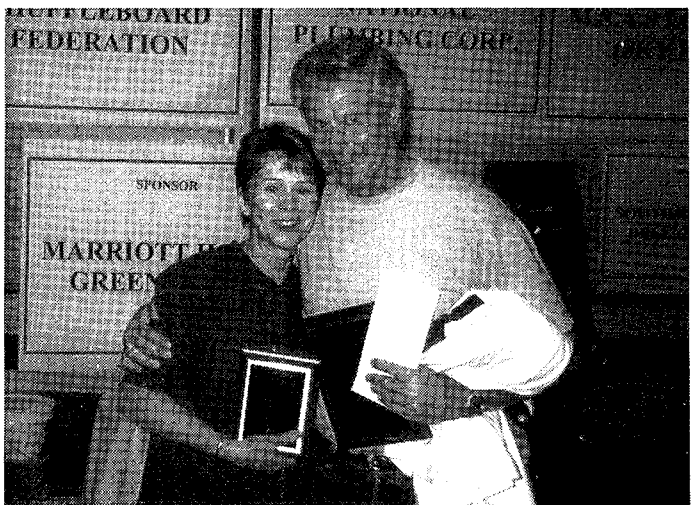
Veasey, Bev McGinty and James Cato took fifth and sixth.



Div. II winners Jim Payne and Jim Kosicke.



Runners-up Gary Thompson and Mike Keevil.



Stars of the show in the pro singles were Bob Shaw and Diana Hagen.

Day Five featured one of the premier events in shuffleboard competition -- singles. While all three divisions were double elimination, the pro format required a player to win two out of three games per match to advance. Many observers consider this year's pro final to be one of the most exciting matches of the tourney. Bob Shaw edged out Diana Hagen after each player had won a game. In the rubber game, with Bob on 14 and Diana on 13 with the hammer, Bob was able to hide his last weight.

Diana tried to hit but missed and as they say: "the rest is history." Congratulations to both!



Harvey ("Silver Tongued Devil") Kidd, having finished his auctioneering duties, claimed third place. He accepts his plaque from Jack Scott.



Amateur Div. I (1's, 2's, 3's) was dominated by the ladies as Ann Walker (center) claimed first place and Mary Koterak of Houston took second. Ron Bowers of Austin was a third place finisher, with Dave Ramold coming in fourth.



In amateur Div. II (3's, 4's, 5's), Lorraine ("Hurricane") Bingham of Santa Clara, California, who made laminated weight case tags for all the contestants, showed her "mettle" by taking first place. Way to go, Lorraine!

Kim Andrews of Austin claimed second, Mike Keevil came in third, and Joe ("Fannin Flash") Parish of Houston claimed fourth. Honors for fifth/sixth places were shared by local Sammy Stringer and Larry Nance.

CONGRATULATIONS, Y'ALL!

Volunteers and Sponsors Make it Work in Houston

Whether it's a chili cook-off or school fundraiser, the participation of volunteers and sponsors is essential in assuring a successful outcome to an enterprise such as this. This year, as in the past, the organizers of the Houston Holiday Open wish to acknowledge the contributions of time, labor and money....

PETE WORSNOP provided posters and circulars. NANCY RICE took photos, wrote an article for The Board Talk, and helped coordinate the registration table. DENISE KLEIN, lap-top computer expert, along with SYLVIA MARTINEZ and KIM ANDREWS, kept the registration and money-handling process running smoothly -- the best this reporter has seen to date! JOHNNY WAYNE CRAWFORD, TOM MILAN and JOHNNY BALLARD showed their expertise at leveling boards and WAYNE HAMMOND kept them clean and well-stocked throughout the tournament. BILL RICE, assisted by KEN STRONG, did an exemplary job on the bracket boards, while RENE ROBERTS assisted at the registration table with sales of tournament shirts, Board Talk subscriptions and Federation weight raffle tickets. DON MEEHAN was spotted every once in a while, doing something or other. Special thanks to PERLA SCOTT and Cummins-Allison Corp. for donating the use of a currency counting machine that sure sped things up! It wouldn't seem like Houston Holiday Open without HARVEY KIDD doing the auctioneering and making people smile. Harvey also gave HHO a sweet deal on use of a Ryder truck from his rental fleet.

DAVID STEGMAN, through his company, Replay Amusements, provided some of the finest boards available. His "crack" team of technicians spent a lot of time preparing and setting them up. Replay also provided a P.A. system, coin machine, juke box and Karaoke system.

JOHN MCDERMOTT, director, North American Championships in Reno, Nevada, donated Shuffleboard Federation dust and silicone as well as a set of weights, which were raffled. The money raised (\$960) was split equally between the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame, the Texas Shuffleboard Hall of Fame and the Bowers Rating System.

The National Plumbing Corporation, thanks to JOHNNY BALLARD, was a platinum sponsor this year. Most local shuffleboard tournament players are familiar with the name, Sky King Air Freight. The name has changed to M S A S Logistics, but thanks

to MAHLON and RONNIE MOORE, the generosity and support remain the same.

If you're ever in Houston, looking for a game of 'board, get on over to Westheimer Rd., west of the beltway, and look for DANNY'S SPORTS BAR, TRIPLE CROWN BAR or SANSONNE'S BAR. These three bars held qualifiers prior to the Houston Holiday Open and have nine of the finest boards in the city!

Thanks to DON CRALL, Del City, Oklahoma, home of the Southwest Open, for purchasing six sponsor shirts, and THE BOARD TALK for donating three subscriptions for the raffle. Special thanks to LORRAINE BINGHAM for her unsolicited act of generosity. She brought the equipment and the skill to make personalized weight case name tags for all the registered participants.

Last, on behalf of the Houston Shuffleboard Community, this reporter would like to thank JACK SCOTT and JOHNNY BALLARD for their vision and perseverance. They are true FRIENDS OF THE GAME!

Houston Holiday Open Revelers Welcome New Year!

One of the highlights of every Houston Holiday Open is the gala New Year's Eve Party. We wish to thank those hardy souls who came from far and near to spend the better part of a week with us and to "raise the roof" without a care for millennium bugs, designated drivers, mothers-in-law...you name it!

This year was no exception to the party rule as, in addition to those 16 beautiful boards, a 15 x 30' dance floor and a 35' buffet table were erected in the Grand Ballroom. A sumptuous offering of glazed breast of chicken, lasagna, quiche and numerous finger foods was displayed for our guests to enjoy -- complimentary, of course.

The ladies in attendance donned evening finery(i.e. dresses!) and many of the men were noted to be sartorially resplendent as well! Dancing rivaled shuffleboard as a group activity with the Keevils of Washington giving Two-Step lessons to Texans. Conga and macarena lines also prevailed, as well as a game that involved passing cucumbers and grapefruit from under one person's chin to another...HMMM!?

A good time was had by all! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

(Editor's Note: See Notebook for viewpoints and photos of the Houston Holiday Open.)

Notebook *(continued from Page 19)*

Actually, to be truthful, I have noticed the number of men players in the big tournaments are increasing. Like this year in Houston, two players who had played less than a year, J.T. and Chuck Leach, captured first place in the A-B amateur draw, passing up many seasoned players. I don't know who was more surprised, us or them. This being their first tournament, it was great that they also got to see some of the greats play like Melton, the Williams Brothers, Ballard, Shaw, Hunt, Koterias, Hagen, and how could we forget the person who showed the little girl from Fairfield, Diana, how to play -- Howard Mouton. Having been away from the big tournament scene for several years, he breezed into town with the quiet tenacity of a John Wayne. He clicked his spurs, laid down his money with that sheepish grin we've all seen before, like he knew something we didn't. He glided his way to victory and snatched first place with his Clearlake pal, Dale Williams. Could it be Howard is back?

Unknown to everyone attending (even the recipient!) was the induction of Diana Hagen to the Texas Hall of Fame, to my knowledge, the only woman inductee. Many of the Texas players who have come onto the scene in the last six years will tell you she has encouraged, inspired them not to give up, and even loaned a few bucks to enable them to play. In short, she has done more than just come, play, and leave with her winnings. Her standing ovation left a usually vocal Diana speechless and a little shaken. Johnny Ballard commented: I was fine 'til they actually announced it. I had a lump in my throat and was really moved.

The last day of the festivities began with what Gwyn Orsi and onlookers said was the best cliffhanger finals they had seen in awhile. The matches for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places started at 11 a.m. and ended at 7 p.m., with Bob Shaw battling Diana for first and winning, and Harvey Kidd taking third.

Then the infamous New Year's Eve Bash began with a sumptuous formal buffet dinner. Everything from conga lines, macarena and table dances by the gals (hey, I made more in tips there than at the tournament). The party hardy group finally closed up shop at 5:30 a.m. What better way to end the year than with some of the best players and best memories you will treasure for years to come. Isn't that what it's all about? Competition and the friendships you mold along the way.

See you all next year. Bring your Christmas spirit

and fasten your seatbelts for another Texas bull ride.

Nancy Rice, Houston, Texas



Author Nancy Rice playing pass the grapefruit with Mike Keevil of Washington.



Then Mike proceeds to play pass the cucumber with Sylvia Martinez.



Mary Koterias and Johnny Ballard show their stuff on the dance floor.



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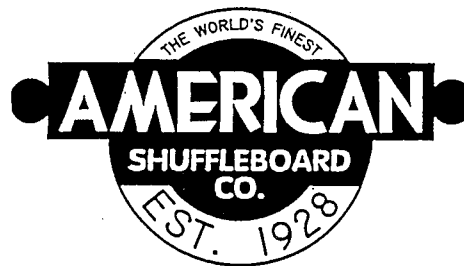
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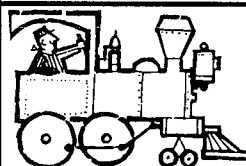
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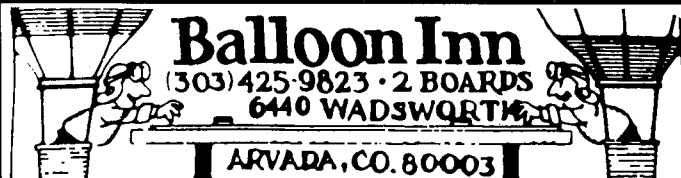
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- Al Stewart ● Bellflower Bruce Hale
 - Bobby Goldsmith ● Tommy Workman
 - Billy Chiles ● George Lucas
 - Hal Perry ● Porter White
 - Karl Spickelmier ● Don Cox
- ... With more to come!***

More Notebook

Bev's Michelle Needs Prayers

Could you please let everyone know that my daughter Michelle's brain cancer has come back and ask them to pray for her. As you know, her cancer is one of the worst kinds. She was never expected to live one year and she has made 3-1/2 years. They keep telling us she is a miracle and I believe in miracles.

If anyone wants to send cards, send them to:

Michelle Chalstrom/Bev Lukens

132 13th St., Apt. 6

Seal Beach CA 90740

Phone: 562-431-4314 (Michelle)

714-761-5509 (Bev)

There are so many in our shuffleboard family who are facing illness right now and need our prayers.

Bev Lukens, Cypress, California

Our hearts go out to you and Michelle, Bev. We hope she will hear from many members of the shuffleboard family. You are right about other members of the family needing our prayers right now (see the Thuman's letter).

And So Do Others....

There are several shuffleboard friends who need everyone's prayers and best wishes:

Don Cox, who recently underwent a five-way heart by-pass (P.O. Box 825, Forest Hill CA 95631)

Paul Weber, who had to have his leg amputated (P.O. Box 8143, Bellflower CA 90706)

Jay Wilson (Jaybird), who had a second leg amputation (5745 Del Amo Blvd., Lakewood CA 90713)

Chuck Norris, who is suffering from severe heart problems (11509 S.E. Bush St., Portland OR 97266)

Bellflower Bruce Hale, whose business was destroyed by fire (3198-F Airport Loop Dr., Costa Mesa CA 92626)

...Plus anyone else we are not aware of as of this writing.

Our friends need our support and we can't think of better friends to do this than the entire shuffleboard family.

Lois and Freddie Thuman, Auburn, California

Please, family members, remember these fellow shufflers in your prayers and drop them a note of encouragement. We can certainly relate to Paul Weber and Jay Wilson. George lost his leg when he was 13 years old, yet managed to play softball, baseball, football and basketball in high school, and continues to play shuffleboard today -- 57 years later (Paul probably isn't even that old yet!). It takes guts, but all of the people you mentioned have plenty of that, and we wish them well!

We'd also like to add to your list some Michigan women shufflers who could use encouragement:

Marie Sweeney (see *Shuffleboard Sweethearts*), currently undergoing chemotherapy for cancer, 54 S. Broadway, Apt. 14, Lake Orion MI 48362

Betty Parrish, multiple physical challenges and will undergo surgery soon, 6621 Doyon Dr., Waterford MI 48327

Carrie Clifton, who has met her many challenges with courage and now faces another surgery, 16 Mary Dr., Lansing MI 48906. She'll be out of commission for the next three months, but hopes to be back in action to direct the Rudy Stober Memorial in July.

As the Puck Turns....

By George & Donna

In all of our 16 years and 2 months of publishing The Board Talk, never have we had such a mix of triumph and tragedy in The World of Shuffleboard!

When you're editing and typesetting glowing reports of successful tournaments, even though you couldn't be there in person, you "feel" like you were, applauding the winners (and the losers for trying), being part of the standing ovation for Diana's induction into the Texas Hall of Fame, having fun at the Houston Holiday Open New Year's Eve Party.

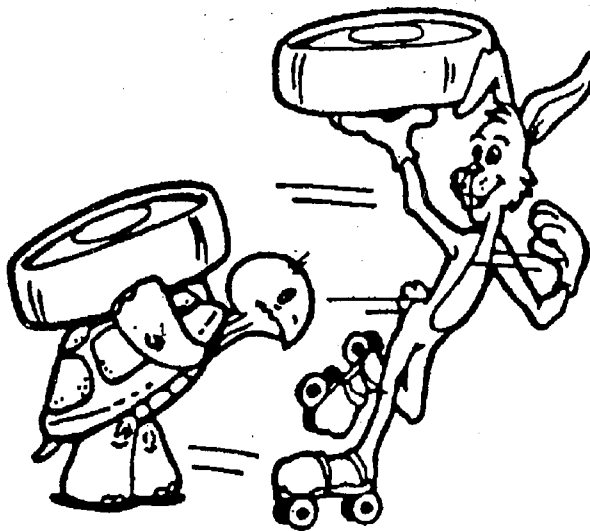
At the same time, we suffer with Bev Lukens and all the people Lois and Freddie have mentioned, plus our home state shufflers who face challenges.

We'll never forget the "testimonies" of Freddie and Bob Hunt at our induction into the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame: "George and Donna have made the World of Shuffleboard a FAMILY!"

We take that tribute very seriously and we ask you, in our final months as your editors, to respond to the needs of members of your "family" in their times of challenge.

We sincerely hope you will never forget that special "mission." It's what sets you apart and makes you a member of a very special sport!

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George & Donna Wilber, Publishers
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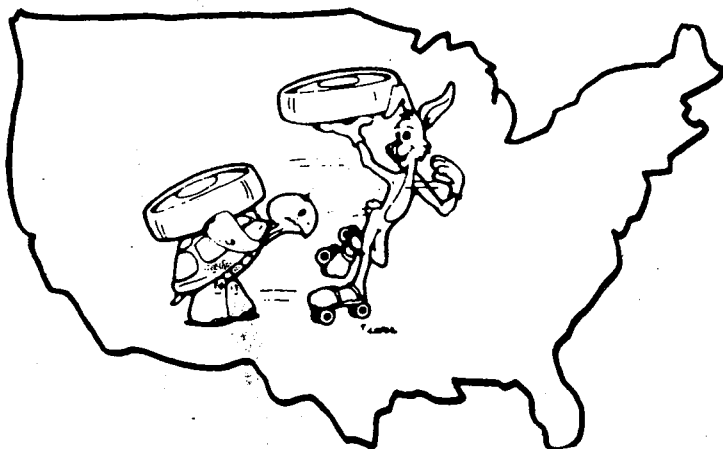
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