

Table Shuffleboard Association (TSA)

TSA Hall of Fame Inductee

Plans & Updates

The TSA Board of Directors reviewed, considered, and voted on nominations submitted by the Shuffleboard Community for Table Shuffleboard Association (TSA) Hall of Fame inductions during their July 2000 TSA Board of Director's meeting the Southwest Open 2000 Del City, OK tournament. There were three inductions voted and decided, being Ron/Debbie Bowers of Austin, TX and Bill English (deceased) of Colorado (previously from Texas) and one that has not yet officially been reached to accept the nomination and plan the ceremony (so this third induction plan and inductee name is being held private until proper contacts and plans are finalized).

There were also several nominations that were received and reviewed during the July 2000 TSA meeting in Del City that may be reconsidered and/or voted during the next TSA annual meeting. In addition, one new nomination package has been received for review and vote at the next TSA annual meeting -- currently scheduled to occur during the Southwest Open's Del City tournament 2001 (so, if you have someone you feel is worthy of induction at the National Hall of Fame level, please get your nominations prepared and sent to the TSA Secretary (Lynda P. French) timely, per TSA By-Law stipulations, so that it can be considered and voted during the 2001 meeting).

By the time you receive this January 2001 The Board Talk issue, Ron/Debbie Bowers induction ceremony will have been performed. You will see updates on the actual induction ceremony in your February 2001 issue. The TSA Directors plan to communicate background history on all upcoming inductees in The Board Talk. Ron/Debbie Bowers' background history is included in this January 2001 issue. Bill English's background history will be included in the February 2001 issue. We hope you enjoy reading about these new TSA Hall of Fame inductees!

READERS: If you wish to donate to the TSA National HOF organization, make payable to TSA and mail to TSA c/o Secretary, 12710 Red Deer Pass, Austin, TX 78729-6436 Thanks!

Ron/Debbie Bowers TSA HOF (Bowers Rating System)

Ron/Debbie Bowers were nominated and voted into the TSA Hall of Fame as "Promoters" of the sport of table shuffleboard. They designed, manage, and maintain the Bowers Rating System which provides table shuffleboard players a channel to play in fairly matched tournament events, much the same as other professional sports such as pool and bowling. This rating system enables tournament directors to plan fair and equitable events for their tournaments and promotes and encourages players to participate in tournaments within their determined skill category - giving growth to the game of table shuffleboard and bringing in new players.

Texas Couple Falls In Love

Ron/Debbie Bowers met through Debbie's cousin Lorie. Lorie was Ron Bowers secretary in Austin, TX, but moved to Corpus Christi, TX where Debbie lived at the time. Lorie suggested one day to Debbie, "let's go visit my prior boss [Ron Bowers] in Austin for the weekend - He has a neat place on Lake Travis and we can stay there." Debbie agreed, so they hit the road for a weekend in Austin [not knowing that Debbie was about to meet her future husband].

Debbie and Lorie met Ron and others at one of the Austin area's popular hangouts named *Michael Michaels* on Anderson Lane (which sold shortly thereafter and was renamed to *Pinata's* where new owner added one shuffleboard after their purchase) and then the joyous group went to Ron's beautiful home on the lake for the remainder of the weekend. As the weekend ended and Debbie and Lorie headed back to Corpus Christi, they were backing out of Ron's driveway when Debbie commented to Lori - "I'm going to marry that man [Ron]." Lorie laughed and replied "Debbie, dream on, Ron is one of the most sought after bachelors in the Austin area." [*In other words, don't hold your breath waiting for that to happen!!*].

However, to Lorie's surprise, Ron started courting Debbie long distance immediately and within three months Debbie and Lorie quit their jobs,

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Ron/Debbie Bowers (Continued)

Austin and signed a six month lease to share an apartment (they both worked for the same employer in Corpus, so their employer was both surprised and devastated to lose both of them simultaneously!).



Pictured Above: Debbie (left) and Ron (right) during their courting days! (How many of you actually recognize Ron in above picture?)

Texas Couple Gets Hitched

Within a couple months of this big move to Austin, Debbie strutted in happily one day flashing a big diamond ring in front of Lorie, saying "I told you so!" and within two months of this engagement, Ron & Debbie were legally "hitched" on Feb. 22nd, 1986... and later in this couple's life story, as we all know, the Bowers Rating System was born!



(Ron & Debbie Bowers pictured above celebrating on that memorable wedding day!)

Shuffleboard Addiction Commences!

Ron started doing a little shuffling with da' boys [Debbie wasn't really playing yet, but watched and learned from da' boys] with some local shufflers such as "Coach" (Lyndon Baize) and Greg Tedford, playing at *Pinata's* on Anderson Lane, Austin, TX which was the establishment where Ron & Debbie originally met (named *Michael Michaels* when they first met, but had no shuffleboard). Ron recalls his first very first tournament at *Pinata's* when his partner was a "no show" – but "WOW", he got a free T-shirt for showing up with no partner! *Pinata's* closed shortly thereafter, so the gang of shufflers moved further down the road on Anderson Lane to *New West* (a country western dance hall that had two shuffleboards). Ron started running tournaments at *New West* for da' boys, but finally also started a weekly Sunday afternoon "Ladies Tournament," in hopes Debbie would get up the nerve and interest to also start playing shuffleboard. Among some of the ladies that joined Debbie in this newly established weekly "Ladies Tournament" were Wanda Knox, Marilyn Young, Wilma Taylor, Donna (NKA Donna Hurst - Junior's better half), and Diana Milligan (Alfred Suarez's better half). These ladies got tough and soon became some real challengers against da' boys! Debbie says that when she joined this "Ladies Tournament," she was the "greenest" player, but was "determined to play and learn."

Next this shuffling gang moved to the *Texas Mist* on the corner of Burnet Road and Highway 183 N. where Don McCurry owner/manager had asked Ron to run shuffleboard tournaments. Ron accepted the offer and Don McCurry brought in a second shuffleboard (later he brought in a third board). Shortly after moving their play to the *Texas Mist*, Joe Rodden and Don Valk started up League Play in Austin area, so the *Texas Mist* players joined the League Play fun! They rotated their league play in the Austin area at establishments such as the Horse Shoe Lounge, Shoal Creek Saloon, Common Interest, *Texas Mist*, and more... all having a great time!

Bill Moody of Austin, TX was one of Ron and Debbie Bowers shuffleboard mentors. They learned much from Bill in their early days of play.

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Ron/Debbie Bowers (Continued)

1993: Birth of the "Texas Open" and "Bowers Rating System"!

Ron and Debbie Bowers, along with many other local and remote area shuffleboarders started attending the famous annual "U.S. Open" tournaments held in Austin, TX where Don Valk was the tournament founder and Tournament Director from 1987 - 1992. Ron and Debbie Bowers started up the "Texas Open" the following year at which time they also started the Bowers Rating System. They started with rating local players, then Texas and Oklahoma players. Since it's birth in 1993, the Bowers Rating System has grown to encompass all U.S. geographies and parts of Canada. The number of raters and rated players steadily increases with each year since it's birth in 1993.

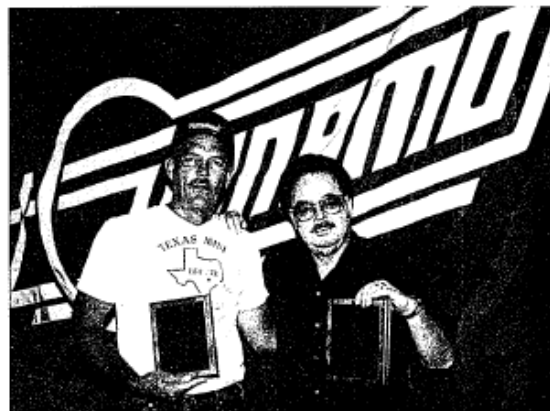
Some pictures from the last "U.S. Open" held at the Villa Capri in Austin, TX in 1992 where Ron and Debbie Bowers and players from across the U.S. were in attendance are found in pictures below. (Ron and Debbie Bowers realized the need to establish a rating system for large tournament play when they decided to take on the task of continuing the tradition of an annual major tournament in Texas by founding the "Texas Open" which was held at the Texas Mist from 1993-1995. The Bowers Rating System was born concurrent with the birth of the "Texas Open"!



Above: Ron Bowers (right) accepting team event award with his team members (left to right front row): Greg Tedford, Tina Wade, Diana Milligan-Suarez and Johnny Ballard (left back) and Bill Moody (right back) during the 1992 U.S. Open



Left: Debbie Bowers (back left) helping at front desk and watching her brother Steve the "Breeze" (far right) and Alfred Suarez (player to left center and great friend of the Bowers) in a match during the 1992 U.S. Open



Above: Steve the "Breeze" (left - Debbie Bowers brother) and J.D. Sweet (right) accepting doubles award at the 1992 U.S. Open

NOTE: Steve and J.D. are both battling serious health problems - please remember them in your prayers.



Left: Dee Moody (left - Bill Moody's wife) and Linda Valk (right) [could they be mixing a Bloody Mary?] during the 1992 U.S. Open

Right: "Coach" Lyndon Baize (a dear friend and early shuffleboard compadre of Ron and Debbie Bowers) during the 1992 U.S. Open



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Ron/Debbie Bowers (Continued)

Awards & Miscellaneous

Ron and Debbie Bowers got serious about playing shuffleboard in the mid-80's and have been promoters of the sport and hosted many tournaments of all sizes for many years since then. After receiving notice that the *Texas Mist* was being sold and closed, the "Texas Open" moved to D/FW area and is still alive and well, being hosted and directed by David and Bobby Williams.

The three boards from the *Texas Mist* were moved to *Taz Country*, Pflugerville, TX (current owners, Gene and Sarah Criminger have since added 2 more home boards, bringing the total to 5 boards) where Ron and Debbie Bowers run tournaments three nights per week. They were also tournament Directors at Tax Country for the the Second Annual Texas State Championship tournament in April 2000. They conduct many tournaments throughout the year and dedicate much time and support to keeping shuffleboard alive and growing in Texas and across the country with their Bowers Rating System work.

Ron and Debbie were honored and presented an "Appreciation" award from the National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame in 1998 during the Houston Holiday Open. They were nominated and inducted into the Texas Hall of Fame in April 2000. They were presented with the Sol Lipkin Award in October 2000 during the NASC Reno tournament. And NOW they are being presented and awarded the well deserved Table Shuffleboard Association's Hall of Fame induction award on December 28, 2000 during the Houston Holiday Open.

"Ron and Debbie: CONGRATULATIONS and MANY THANKS FOR YOUR PROMOTION OF THE SPORT OF TABLE SHUFFLEBOARD!"

-- From all your Shuffleboard Family!

READERS: Watch for the Bowers TSA HOF Induction Ceremony details and read about Bill English's background in your next issue of *The Board Talk* - February 2001 Issue!!



Right: Debbie (left) and Ron (right) Bowers enjoying themselves at Taz Country in Pflugerville, TX while running one of their weekly tournaments



Above: Brian Walker (left) and Bobbie Williams (right) presenting Ron and Debbie Bowers (center) the Texas Shuffleboard Hall of Fame induction award in April 2000 during the Second Texas State Championship tournament held at Taz Country.



Above: Ron (left) and Debbie (to his right) receiving the Sol Lipkin award in Reno (see December 2000 issue of *The Board Talk*, page 9 for more details)