

# **The California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame**

**Induction Ceremony  
Honoring  
George Lucas**



**Presented at the  
Elks Lodge  
Downey, California  
January 23, 1999**

**CONGRATULATIONS  
GEORGE LUCAS**



**THIS IS YOUR LIFE—  
all 81 years!**

## **George Lucas, This is Your Life—**

Our champion, George Lucas is one of a rare breed—a native Los Angeleno. He was born January 22, 1918, at 28th and San Pedro, in L.A., son of a German mother, and Greek immigrant father, who came to the U.S. when he was eight years old.

In 1936, at 18 years of age, George graduated from Jefferson High School. He played right end on their football team, and Woody Strode, a great athlete and actor, who later became an Olympic medalist and appeared in 56 movies, played left end.

The Greeks, with their Olympian heritage, decided they would hold a Junior Olympic event for the high schools from San Diego to Santa Barbara, to be held at Fremont High School. Of the five events in which George competed, he won first place in four events, and took second place in the fifth, being crowned with the traditional olive wreath in all of them.

George has often said, "I've been a champion all my life." He explains, "I was Team Captain of my football team, and was All City, and won 4 out of 5 events in the Junior Olympics. To become a champion, you've got to *work* at being a champion with all your heart and soul."

He got married when he was 19, to his high school sweetheart and had six children. Their 20-year marriage ended in divorce. Later he met and married Shirley, who was working at Douglas, and they have been married for 35 years.

As early as junior high school, George had decided he wanted to become an architectural or design engineer, and began studying sheet metal, on through high school and trade school. He had a schol-

arship to go to UCLA, which he had to turn down because his practical father, who had a 40-acre truck farm ranch, insisted he become part of the family produce business.

A year and a half later, when George finally did get into sheet metal, he said, "In the old days, the old-timers wouldn't help you or show you anything. No, they were too jealous and afraid you would take their job. You'd be on a building two or three stories high, and they would push your tool box off, and say, "Now you go pick it up."

George decided then that he would never become like they were, and vowed he would pass his varied talents on to anyone who could use his help. At the age of 24, he was plant superintendent over a hundred people, for Hodge Sheet Metal. Later, he had his own business, in 1960, when he started designing dies in his garage to make aluminum railings for porches, balconies and staircases.

In 1940, George first began to play shuffleboard, starting with freehand shooting, then learning how to shoot from the edges. He was working at Slauson and Lane, and there was a bar with a shuffleboard about a block away, which soon became his favorite watering hole. He also went to Eileen's on San Bernardino Road. Then in the 50s, shuffleboard became so popular that every bar had one, which widened his choices.

He bought a dinner house in Crestline County, which he owned from 1981 to 1985, called "The Ponderosa." He redesigned the interior, put in a 40-foot bar and, naturally, a shuffleboard. He also had a snooker table, which was the only one in the mountains, with a piano bar. George said, "I taught the whole town of



Crestline to shoot shuffleboard and went around to other towns, encouraging league play.”

Fifteen years ago, George began designing shuffleboards of the future, with a base made of 1/4” aluminum plate covered with Formica, with a metal carriage and built-in stabilizers. This method of fabrication was unheard of back then, but is in use now.

Another facet of George’s varied career was his athletic side. He tried out for the Triple A Los Angeles Angels while in high school. He played semi-pro baseball until he was 40. He explained, “I played center field and then when I got older, I pitched. I was a side-arm pitcher. I played with the the Montebello Merchants, who were the best in Los Angeles .”

George’s football coach in high school was Harry Edison, three-time All American for USC. During his senior year, George’s coach organized a team called the Maroons. Woody Strode played for the team which was the L.A. Ram’s predecessor, The Dons, Los Angeles pro football team. George was invited to go work out and practice with them.

George has always been, and continues to be a great family man. He is very proud of his wife Shirley, and his six children, Carol Ann, Linda, Angela, Patricia, Peter, and Michael.

Regarding the future of shuffleboard, George says, “In-house tournaments are fine, but league play is necessary to bring in new players, to get all the existing players involved, and to keep the game of shuffleboard alive and well.”

Congratulations, George, and welcome to the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame!

## **George's friends speak out . .**

I've known George Lucas since the early 80's. I met him at the Edgewood in Bellflower, California. I've had a few R&R's with him, and the last time I saw him at the Dixie Belle in Downey, we won a Round Robin together.

George is rated as a "2" player, but on any given day, he is a "1". He will play anybody, any time for \$10 or \$20. He is a great supporter, and definitely a pioneer that has done his share to keep shuffleboard going wherever he is. He is past 80, and still going strong.

He deserves this honor as a player and promoter. Congratulations, George!

*—Glen Davidson, President  
National Shuffleboard Hall of Fame*

George Lucas has been a shuffleboard player for most of his adult life. He deserves to be recognized and honored for his dedication. Congratulations, George.

Welcome to the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame.

*—Jolene Lembke, President  
California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame*

Congratulations, George, God bless you!  
From one old-timer to another. We are the last of a dying breed.

*—Cadillac Joe*

## **More from George's friends**

I have played shuffleboard with George over the years, and always enjoyed his competitiveness. He has my sincere congratulations on his induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame.

*—Paul Weber*

George, you keep telling me how good you are. I just hope I will be able to shoot the game as good as you when I'm 80+, and I only hope to see 80.

You are not only the best in your bracket, but in my book, you're the best, PERIOD!

Keep on Pucking! Congratulations.

*—Jim "Marlin" Martin*

Congratulations, George, from one Hall of Famer to another!

*—Sal Lipkin*

George, remember that bottle of Metaxa I bought for you? I'm still waiting to share it with you.

Congratulations on your induction into the Shuffleboard Hall of Fame!

*—Eileen Eades*

This is a great event in your life, George. Congratulations!

*—Bobbi Todd*



### **More from George's friends:**

George, congratulations on being selected to join the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame.

As most of you know, I'm comparably new to the world of shuffleboard, and George Lucas was the reason for my first encounter with the game.

In the Dixie Belle back room, it was George, who first placed a shuffleboard in that room. It was because of that board that the Dixie Belle progressed to the four boards it has today. Now, George, I don't know if I should thank you for that feat or not.

I should apologize to you, George, for all the times you drew me for a partner in Round Robins or Meat Shoots, while I was learning to play shuffleboard. Thanks for not shooting me in the parking lot, or some other strategic place.

On another note, approximately a year ago, Eileen and I went to Santa Rosa for George's 80th birthday party. At that time I got to meet George and his lovely family at a non-competitive event. We were very favorably impressed with George and his family.

As most of you know, I have "overly-developed" mouth muscles, so I had to question George about having all those good looking children. However, Shirley assured me they were all legit—I still wonder . . .

Again, congratulations, Kid Lucas, on your induction into the Shuffleboard Hall of Fame, and for being my friend.

*—Wes Eades*



## **We hear from George's friends:**

George—you are the greatest, even if you wear that stupid cap and smoke those cheap cigars!

—*Lee Nathan*

I have known George for quite some time, and he always shoots the game his way.

Oft times he has been my partner, and some times my adversary, but we always treated each other with great respect. I truly enjoy the smell of his cigars.

I can only hope that when I'm 81, I will still be shooting shots. Congratulations.

—*Bellflower Bruce*

Congratulations to a gentleman and a scholar—George Lucas.

—*Tim O'Brien*

George—what can I say, but congratulations!

—*Chris Brown*

Congratulations George, not only on being inducted into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame, but also for being the oldest active shuffleboard player in the State of California, and probably in the whole nation!

—*Joanie Swenson*

## **More from George's friends:**

I've known George Lucas for at least 25 to 30 years. I think I met him at the Edgewood where we became friends through playing shuffleboard with, and against each other.

He will probably still be playing when he reaches 100, because he really loves the game.

He is a competitor and gives his all during every game. Keep on playing, George, and welcome to California's Shuffleboard Hall of Fame.

Your friend,  
—Jay "Jaybird" Wilson

George, one of the best games I have ever shot was the night I had you as an opponent at the Dixie Belle.

We talked as well, and I enjoyed the time we had together very much.

Thanks for everything.

—Tom Wolfe

Congratulations, George. Long time coming, but worth the wait. Good for you!

Your old buddy,

—Bill Duncan

Hi, George! Well, it's about damn time. Mr. Lucas, you are a champion in my eyes. Congratulations. Love ya!

—Sharon Arnundson

### **More from George's friends . . .**

Good for you, George. It's about time. We will always be your friends. Hope you feel the same. Thanks for all the good times we had in the Ponderosa

—*Dodie and Jim*

Congratulations, George. I'm happy to say it's been a pleasure knowing you and your wife Shirley these many years.

I miss the traveling from to bar to bar team play, and especially at Smitty's up on Signal Hill where I first met you. Your encouragement to me on my shuffleboard playing was always well received.

I'm still trying to remember to use a lot of garlic and olive oil in my cooking. Thanks for the game tips, anyway.

The best to you and Shirley always.

—*Pearl*

George Lucas, your induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame is in recognition of your love for the game, and to the many, many players you have helped through the years.

A toast to you, Mr. George Lucas, a true sportsman and a gentleman. Have a great day on your day, George!

Your friend always,

—*Young Bob Davidson*



## More from George's friends

I've known George a week or two — about 30 years. I've seen George play against the best and the worst. I've never seen him cry about winning or losing. He's always been a gentleman and for this I respect him very much.

I think you deserve this honor, George, and congratulations!

—*Frank Bentley*

I know you deserve to be in, because of the fact that you've devoted your time for so many years. Congratulations, George!

—*Eric Chiles*

George is someone I enjoy playing with and against. It's a pleasure having that caliber of player in the game.

—*Paul Elliott*

Over the years, it's been a pleasure knowing you. Your presence has been felt in my heart.

Funny when we first met, I never knew you worked for my grandfather. (P.S., they still use that louvre die.)

I enjoy playing shuffleboard with you and someday, God willing, I'll be able to play as well as you at your young age.

—*Craig Amundson*

### ***More from George's friends:***

Well, George, Congrats! You're a fine, fine, fine player and thank you for helping me in learning the game, (and for the baklava)!

—*Sandy Flood*

I'm really grateful to Mr. George Lucas—when I was a beginner, he chose me to be his partner some years ago, when I was ignored by all the other good players.

I gained a lot of confidence in my game because of this nice gesture of his.

Thanks, George, and congratulations!

—*Freehand Bobby Ruiz*

I have known George for so many, many years. He was a very good player then, and he is still a very good player for his age.

—*Al Stewart*

Hi, George. Long time coming, and well deserved. I'm with you all the way.

—*Jim Boik, The Edgewood*

George, I was happy to hear about your induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. It has been great knowing you.

*Sally*

Congratulations, George. I have been happy to know you.

—*Pat M.*

## **Everyone remembers George . . .**

Vern Booth remembers George Lucas from the days in the Artesian during the 1960's. Some other players from that era were Kermit, Silverdollar Bob, Red Hat Ray, Fireball, Orange County Frank, Vern Jones, and Frank Bently. Vern also remembers that George talked about being a semi-pro baseball and football player. George also knew everyone who went to Reese High School. At one time, George owned a bar in the mountains, with a shuffleboard. Probably named The Ponderosa and located in Crestline or Lake Gregory.

Anna and I remember George, mostly from the Peanut House. During tournaments, we would have to call the Edgewood to find him when it was his turn to play.

We also remember playing with George at the PCSA tournaments in Las Vegas, as well as many tournaments at the Dixie Belle.

I recall that Big Mike and his brother-in-law Little Big Mike used to go to the Ponderosa when Big Mike was living in Big Bear. Ron Kepner and Bruce Harvey also talked about playing there.

We wish George a hearty congratulation on his induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame and hope his next 80 years will be as good as the last.

*—Bob and Anna Brunskill*



***George's friends have the last word:***

Congratulations, George on your induction into the California Hall of Fame.

Besides being a true gentleman and a great shuffleboard player, we are proud to be your friends.

We can't think of a more deserving candidate. Best of luck to one of the pioneers of shuffleboard.

*—Tony and Dottie Bastanchury*

Once a champion, always a champion!  
Congratulations, George!

*—B.B. Boik, The Edgewood*

George, you are a great player. Love you!

*—Alicia*

Mr. Lucas—Our best wishes to you on your induction into the California Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. May it give you many pleasant memories now, and as you remember in your future, much to be proud of. Fondly,

*—Wally and Audree Rasmussen*

*Happy 81st Birthday, George*

from all your  
shuffleboarding friends!