

From: Dick Button

To: Tenley Albright; Willy Bietak; Brian Boitano; Brian Boitano; Kurt Browning; Frank Carrol; Tom Collin; Robin Cousins; Francis Dafoe; Christopher Dean; Lawrence Demmy; Richard Dwyer; Peggy Fleming Jenkins; Bernard Ford; Sheldon Galbraith; Donald Gilchrist; Ekatarina Gordeeva; Alexander Gorshkov; Dorothy Hamill; Scott Hamilton; Scott Hamilton; Carol Heiss and Hayes Jenkins; Joyce Hisey; Midori Ito; Donald Jackson; Donald Jackson; Courtney Jones; Janet Lynn Salomon; Ron Ludington; Paul Martini; Alexei Mishin; Tamara Moskvina; John Nicks; Brian Orser; Robert Paul; Marina Klimova and Sergei Ponamarenko; Liudmilla Belousova and Oleg Protopopov; Nobuo Sato; Barbara Ann Scott; Barbara Underhill; Barbara Wagner; Katarina Witt; Ben Wright; Kristi Yamaguchi; Petr Barna; Maria Bialous-Zuchowicz; Jean-Christophe Berlot; Janet Carpenter; Hugh Graham; Hugh Graham; James Hines; Junko Hiramatzu; Barbara Holland; Peter Krick; Roberto Pelizzola; Andras Sallay; Sepp Schönmetzler; Alexandra Stevenson; Jerod Swallow; Ingrid Wendl

Cc: Britney Bottoms; Joan Gruber; Larry Mondschein; Ann O'Keefe; Patricia St. Peter; Kathy Slack; Jessica Gaynor; Warren Naphtal; Samuel Auxier; Justin Dillon; Lainie DeMore; Hal Marron; Winston Burbank; Mark Mitchell; Mark Ladwig; Cathleen Renzi; Lindsey Weber; Brandon Forsyth

Sent: Fri, March 9, 2012 7:02:07 PM EDT

Subject: The World Hall Of Fame

March 9, 2012

To Dr Larry Mondschein

Chair of USFSA Hall Of Fame Nominating Committee
Members and Electors of the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame

Dear Larry

Thank you for reminding me today was the deadline for voting in the 2012 election of members of the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame.

I regret to inform you that I will not cast a ballot this year. This has been a long and painful decision because I am an admirer of the nominees and hope my decision will not affect the outcome.

My reason for abstaining is because I think the World Hall of Fame has lost it's independence, it's accountability, it's transparency and it's integrity.

Some reasons

* The World Hall Of Fame is operated by the USFSA. It should be run by an independent organization with no political connections.

* The WHOF is overseen by a Committee of the USFSA: appointed by the USFSA and not accountable to the members or other electors of the Hall. That Committee exercises what appears to be unfettered discretion in deciding how the balloting is conducted and whose names are on the ballot.

* Larry, you have frequently stated "the Nominating Committee thoroughly reviews the credentials of all nominees against a published criteria contained within the Nominating Packet, and available for viewing online." That is not true. The Nominating Packet contains no criteria at

all. Instead, it provides a means for a nominator to set forth all the reasons why that person thinks a candidate should be elected. That is NOT "criteria," but it does give the Nominating Committee complete cover for doing whatever it wants to do regardless of qualifications.

* As for easy access ... that Nominating Packet was originally linked on the Hall of Fame website, it is now available only if you know the web address and type it in manually:
http://www.worldskatingmuseum.org/WHOF_2012_form.pdf.

* Larry you have confirmed that written procedures regarding nominations and who gets on the ballot exist and also noted repeatedly that they are not publicly available. There is no reason why the GUIDELINES for decisions by the Nominating Committee have not been provided to the members and other electors of the Hall. Are the nominators expected to nominate in a vacuum??

* I have been involved with the Hall long enough (and much longer than all other members of the Nominating Committee, with the exception of Ben Wright) to know that procedures in the past have been remarkably uniform: (A) a person nominated in one year will remain under consideration for the following two years without the need for subsequent nominations, and (B) a candidate who is put on the ballot one year will remain on the ballot for the following 2 years if not elected sooner, subject only to certain clear exceptions which are essentially that:

a candidate receives too few votes in the first year... or the vote count drops so significantly over the course of two successive ballotsor newly discovered facts that might disqualify a candidate come to light....

If this does not present an accurate description of those key procedures, the Nominating Committee can easily clarify what they are by publishing them.

* All competitors are required to follow publicly reported rules. The procedures for the Hall should reflect the same principle. Those rules should become effective only when the members and other electors of the Hall vote in favor of them; rules that have been effective (even if only by "tradition") should not be changed without their consent by recorded vote.

* Larry..... when you and I worked on the rules for the WHOF we obtained the balloting services of an accredited Accounting Firm.. Now the USFSA conducts the balloting. The results of the ballots are NOT reported so there is no accountability to the international community that the Hall is supposed to honor. If the USFSA cannot find a pro bono Accounting firm I will be pleased to pay for such for independent supervision.

* The USFSA does not follow its own rules. U.S. federal law (the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act) requires that athletes hold "20 percent of the membership and voting power" of all "committees and entities" of the USFSA. If the Nominating Committee has 6 members, that means at least 2 of its members would have to satisfy the requirements to be an athlete. Unless you, Larry, are an ex officio member and have no vote, two members would have to satisfy the "athlete" requirement as defined by that law (inc the 10 year limitation), but in fact not one of them does.

* There is little TRANSPARENCY.....3 candidates who appeared for the first time on the 2011 ballot were removed from the 2012 ballot. One of them, Sonja Bianchetti, had received 48% of the vote last year. None of the reasons for deleting a name (as listed above) apply. By contrast, one of the U.S. candidates on this year's ballot is being voted on for the fourth consecutive year. Discrepancies exist that do not create an aura of integrity.

* The plea for transparency and accountability stated in the letter of February 22, 2012 circulated to you and the members/electors of the Hall makes numerous points that deserve a response to us. The failure to do so further demonstrates the lack of transparency and the lack of accountability.

I hope you will consider these matters seriously. The credibility of the World Hall is at stake. If it is not addressed properly with clear procedures of transparency and accountability, the "honor" that the Hall is intended to reflect can very quickly be lost.

Respectfully,

Dick Button

CC: Members, USFSA World Hall of Fame Nominating Committee
Brittney Bottoms Tom Collins Joan Gruber
Ann O'Keefe Ben Wright
Members of the USFSA Board of Directors