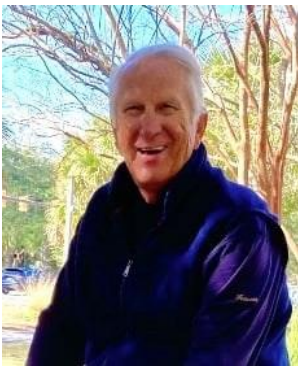


## Sad News

Bobby Brenegan – May 15, 2024



Known by some of our Ice Capades family when the show was in Baltimore.

Robert (Bobby) B. Brenegan, a native of [Williamsburg, Va.](#), died peacefully May 8 at his home on [Hilton Head Island, SC](#) after a short illness. He was 80 years old.

For many years Bobby served as the CFO of *The Next Ice Age*, in which Dorothy Hamill appeared regularly as a special guest star. Over the years the Brenegans hosted *Next Ice Age* skaters in their home for the weeks leading up to a performance....

When **Ice Capades** performed in Baltimore, some of the show's skaters who had previously stayed with the Brenegans visited them, and brought the entire ensemble for an impromptu party.

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/robert-brenegan-obituary?id=55113315>

## Our Alumni in the News

A little Gene Kelly & Peggy Fleming story



In February 1968, Peggy Fleming won the Olympic gold in figure skating at the winter games in Grenoble, France. That summer, my family and I saw her perform at the famous Broadmoor skating rink in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She was beautiful, like a goddess on ice. As it turned out, we were staying at the same Holiday Inn in Colorado Springs. When I went to swim in the pool, she was there in a bikini on a chaise, reading. I've never been one for autographs, then

or now. I didn't want to disturb people. But her graceful style and her accomplishment as the only American gold medalist touched me as a young girl. I overcame my anxiety about intruding and thanked her for her performance the night before. She signed "Best wishes, Peggy Fleming" on a small slip of paper. That same summer, Gene appeared with Fleming on her NBC Special. They skated together, as you can see in this photo—he in his hockey skates and she in her figure skates. I love the picture. Gene, unassuming in his cap, scarf and sweater, gently holding Fleming's hand and side. Fleming would go on to be a member of the class of '70 at the small liberal arts college Colorado College in Colorado Springs and I would go on to be a member of the class of 1980. I did not go on to skate with Gene after I met him 1985. He had hung up his skates by then. But we did watch the skating in the Winter Olympics religiously together and Gene critiqued each skater and cheered for many. Lovely memories.

## Video of the Month

### Kitty & Peter Carruthers – 1985 Ice Capades



You never get tired of seeing them fly around the ice. Enjoy.

<https://fb.watch/s3myztM0tk/>

## Ice Capades 2025 Reunion Cruise Update

Have you made your reservation yet?

Our Ice Capades -Escapades Cruise gathering is getting closer. If you still want to sign up please contact Sheri at [scruises@aol.com](mailto:scruises@aol.com)

We can look forward to catching up with old friends and making new ones!

It's getting closer.



You can reach J at [dabatej@bellsouth.net](mailto:dabatej@bellsouth.net)

[Attendee's list as of May 22, 2024](#)

[Click here](#)

**'Escapades 2025 Cruise' .... We'll have a good time! 🎵🎵**



**Please click below to join the Escapades 2025 Cruise – events page and get all updates relating to the cruise.**

<https://facebook.com/events/s/ice-capades-escapades-cruise-a/746073810575573/>

THIS EVENT IS BEING CREATED AND COORDINATED BY Johnna "J" Bates...

**NOTE: PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED!**

## How Important were our Dressers

### They Work Behind the Scenes

By Mildred Mikkanen

Mrs. Ralph Powers of Greece joked, "We all wanted to be skaters and this is the next best thing."



Dresser Mrs. Ralph Powers of Greece (left) helps Ice Capades skater Louise Gasper of Tremont, Conn., get into her first act costume last night at the War Memorial. Dresser Mary Hens of Ironsquoit (at right) adjusts tray of wigs.

Not one of the six women dressers working backstage at the Ice Capades show in the War Memorial can skate but in two minutes flat these homemakers by day can help zip nearly 40 feminine line skaters out of one intricate, dazzling costume into another one and send them back on the ice on cue.

Even on an opening night like last night, it's not "Panicksville" as Mrs. Merritt Torrey of Penfield gaily put it, but a quiet organized operation. Every one of the 500 costumes valued at over half a million dollars is number keyed to its skater and arranged in its proper place before and after each wearing

by dressers.

They had only brief instructions from the show's wardrobe mistress, Lena DeCiantis of West Warwick, RI. And a cue sheet of show numbers and the skaters and costumes involved. It

was posted on one of the huge aluminum wardrobe crates that, along with black curtains, marked off the girls' dressing area from that used by the men.

The first night is the hardest, said Mrs. Hess, who is president of the local theatrical Wardrobe Attendants union which assigns dressers to visiting theatricals. "We have to learn how the show goes and how the costumes work."

Mrs. Hess was stationed downstairs to dress the show's women stars. Her first task was going to the refreshment stand for a bag of peanuts for Canadian Linda Carbonetto, who sheepishly said, "I've been a good girl. I haven't eaten much today and I'm hungry."

Then Mrs. Hess helped Californian Cherrie Moritz pin on a towering pink feather hat and Darlene Ripeppe wiggle into a snug black Spanish costume with "which notch on the waist band, honey?"

"I enjoy meeting all the kids year after year," said Mrs. Hess and asked, "Is Sheila MacFarland around?" Someone volunteered the information that Sheila had married and was living in Chicago.

Mrs. Hess, Mrs. Higgins and Mrs. McBride have 'worked the show' and hundreds of other theatricals that have come to Rochester since World War II. "We got into it because our husbands were stagehands," Mrs. Higgins explained.

All day Mrs. Higgins who was a Red Cross first aid instructor for 30 years and carries Band Aids and Bufferin along 'in case anyone needs them,' and Mrs. McBride had worked with Miss DeCiantis putting out the costumes, wigs and headgear and arranging the dressing area. When the band struck up the opening "Life is a Three-Ring Circus' number, they had a chance to test the efficiency of the layout. There in a musical chair arrangement each skater had two chairs. One held the costume she was to wear next. The other was for the outfit she discarded. In minutes the girls klunked in on skate guards, pulling off their wigs and shedding costumes on route. The calls "Dresser here!" and "Dresser please!" went up all over the room.

Mrs. McBride, Mrs. Higgins and Mrs. Torrey moved quickly to pull up zippers, fasten belts, tug down bodices, adjust wigs. Mrs. Dear, waiting near the rink for performing skaters to discard the capes of their costumes, tucked them into a hamper and Cotton Candy" number get into skirts that were so heavy men dressers had to lift them so they could be buckled at the waistlines.

Wardrobe dressing is a family affair. During the lulls when skaters performed on the ice, the dressers gathered up the discarded costumes from the chairs and reassembled them on hangers under numbered unbleached cotton covers and returned them to wardrobe crates. "Whew! I'm dripping wet," Mrs. Higgins said breathlessly.

"Panicksville," Mrs. Torrey, whose is assistant stage manager at Eastman Theater, repeated gaily.

Later she added it was a perfect evening, with no struck zippers, burst seams or ripped costumes to mar the split-second changes. “We all like doing this because it’s nice change from housework,”.

## Gotta Love that Smile

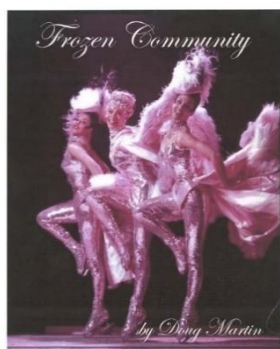
World & European Champion Ája Zánová was born on this day in 1931. She was the first skater from Czechoslovakia to win a World title in any discipline. After winning her second World title in London in 1950, she defected from behind the Iron Curtain under harrowing circumstances and starred in the Ice Follies and Ice Capades.



## RELIVING FOND MEMORIES

Doug Martin had published two books called ‘Frozen Community’ where he wanted to have skaters tell funny stories about their time on the road. Stories were posted before but worth sharing again.

Everyone was a new girl/new boy the first day they joined the Ice Capades. What was yours? This is Gloria Lor’s story.





I grew up in the comfort of a small town in Canada, had auditioned a couple times and finally got my telegram, **yes** a telegram, from Bill Bain to join Ice Capades. I was one of 5 new girls who were called to join in Washington DC in February at the start of rehearsals for the new show. (Randa McKague, Sandy Rasmussen, Mandy Eddy, Faye Strutt). For those who were there in February 1966, Washington happened to have a snowstorm that year that delayed our arrival but we finally arrived. I believe we were staying at the Manger Annapolis Hotel. I found my way to the show office and met the show manager, Jack Balmer. Because the show bus had already left for the arena, we took a taxi and found ourselves next to the railroad yards, where the arena was located. Found out that it was not in the best part of the city and we were warned to make sure that we took the bus back to the hotel. We were given the obligatory 'new girl' speech by anyone who had more seniority than us (guess that meant everyone) that we were not allowed to sit on the bus unless everyone else with more seniority were seated first. My first night in the big city – the chain on my hotel room door was broken so I put a chair against the doorknob. Welcome to the bigtime!!

On the first day of rehearsals our hearts were pounding as all eyes were on us, sizing us up! We all wanted desperately to measure up, hoping that the label of 'New Girl' would quickly go away. Short of that, we looked forward to having newer members join the cast so we could pass the torch to them. In the meantime, we kept our mouths shut and paid close attention to what went on around us. Sometimes New Girls or New Boys were assigned a big sister or brother to whom we could take our questions without fear of being ridiculed, but that didn't always happen.

It was all intimidating but thing eventually worked out. It helped to keep an open mind. Still 50 plus years later at one of our reunions I easily recalled my first day as if it were yesterday. In my day, we rode the train a lot. When we were on a long haul and sleeping on the train, the lowest in seniority got the upper berth, while those with the highest seniority were given roomettes. That was the goal, to be high enough in seniority to get a roomette. Some of the senior cast members were allowed to fly or take alternate transportation to the next city if they wanted, so we kept our fingers crossed that they would do that, which automatically moved us up the seniority line. Maybe then we could at least qualify for a lower berth.

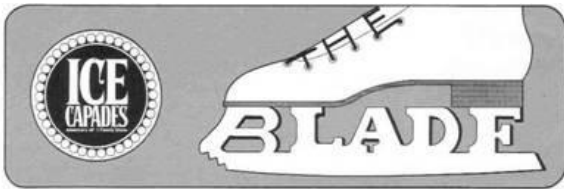
Seniority also reined in the dressing room. Those with the most seniority got the mirrors and were positioned closest to the doors. It filtered down from there. We had to earn our way, eventually getting the respect of our peers, but that wasn't automatic. We had to listen and learn from them. When I joined the show, we had a lot of gypsies (those who had been in the show 10 years or more), but when new management took over, alot of the seasoned skaters left. Because of that, it took only three years for me to reach the top ten when it came to seniority. I was even referred to as a veteran in one newspaper article. Ouch!

***Let's keep Doug's legacy going. I'm sure there are more 'interesting' stories out there from your time in the show. If you would like to share, please send them to me.***

# Pictures from Past Reunions

All Skater's Reunion – May 1-3, 2023 Las Vegas

Ice Capades 2022 Reunion pictures



The website, [www.icecapadestheblade.com](http://www.icecapadestheblade.com) has been revamped and more information has been added. If you have something to add, please send them.

Look here for **2022 Ice Capades Reunion** information, including reunion pictures

**Cast, Precision & Production Pictures** – Relive some memories.

**Past reunion Pictures** – Check them out for some you may have missed.

**Rosters** – Looking for someone or remembering who you skated with in the show?

**Video links** – have been collecting skating 'You Tube' links from the early years.

**Program Covers** – we had the most beautiful covers

**Past Issues of The Blade** – just in case you missed an issue

**Past Reunion Pictures** – relive the times you attended the reunions

**In Memorium** – remembering those who have left us too soon

Check it out!

## Upcoming Events

**2024 The Experience Adult Skate Camp**

**Palm Springs**



**the experience!**

adult skate camp

**Palm Springs 2024**  
**SEPTEMBER 17 - SEPTEMBER 20**  
 Berger Foundation Iceplex

**ON AND OFF-ICE SESSIONS**

Daily off-ice warm up classes in studio

On-ice classes include:

- Randy's Three's Company
- Liz's Jumps, Spins, and Storytelling on Ice
- Jeremy's Movement with Music
- Elin's IceFlow

Small on-ice groups focusing on:

- Turns & Steps
- Jumps
- Choreographic Movement
- Spins

Private lessons available separately on request

**THE EXPERIENCE IS WHAT MAKES THE JOURNEY REMEMBERED**

Enjoy quality time with our coaches and fellow campers at:

- Champagne Welcome
- Catered Lunch & Learns
- Beautiful Dinner and unique Palm Springs outing

**\$1950**

For more details and registration



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<https://www.theexperienceadultskatecamp.com>

RANDY GARDNER

ELIZABETH MANLEY

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