

## Sad News

### Gail Donaldson Lucas – Oct. 29, 2024



Another Ice Capet is counting in 8's again and gliding high above us. On Tuesday October 29, 2024 Gail Donaldson Lucas went to her final ice show with her sister Greer Nishikawa by her side.

Gail was born in Guysborough, Nova Scotia, Canada. She had a lifelong love affair with ice shows.

After graduation, Gail began her skating career with **Ice Capades**. She worked with the #1 ice show from 1959-1961.

Gail then went on to work for Keary Ice Production, Adventures on Ice, a touring show based in Hopkins, Minn.

She toured with Ice Royals as a soloist and choreographer based in Eden Prairie, Minn. Ice Classics was next as a soloist out of San Jose California and produced by another well known name in the business Buddy LaLonde.

Hawaii On Ice was a a touring ice show out of Dayton Ohio and again she was a featured soloist.

Gail's final ice show was Ice Fantasy at the Hacienda Hotel in Las Vegas. This is where I met Gail in 1979. Ice Fantasy appeared to like Ice Capades skaters as a number of us were hired for the show. It was a fun time skating with those professionals from the past to include Sharon Holmes, Billy Chapel, Trish Boswell, Ricky Reid, Suzi Lease, Jan Wood, Susan (Meinhold) Sobel and myself Bev Ward. This show ran from 1977 – 1981. Hanging up her skates when the Hacienda closed Gail stayed in Vegas, she took Computer Sciences at UNLV and worked as a Programmer until her retirement in 2005.

Thanks to social media Gail hooked up with a number of people she once toured with and recently posted a number of photos on the Ice Capades site. I'll remember Gail as having one of the best smiles in the business. Godspeed Gail Donaldson Lucas.

# It only takes 2 to create a mini reunion



## Recently Getting together in Palm Desert

Frank Taylor, Lauri Goldsmith Tepper, Jim & Jennifer Custer

You never know where you are going to end up –



Maria and Otto Jelinek could not foresee, at age 6 and 8, respectively, when this picture was taken in Prague, that they would win the World Pair Championship and co-star in Ice Capades.



# Guess Who?



**1963**

(answer below)

## Scott's back to put you in the Holiday mood

1992 Fantasy Christmas on Ice



Click below

[Merry Christmas to all, and to all, a good night!](#)

# Down Memory Lane

## Czechs' Loss, Our Gain



By Ruth Kling

Aja Zanova, currently a talent scout for the Ice Capades, has been skating since the age of 5. Although she really didn't like skating (she wanted to learn to ski), at 7 she entered a local skating competition in her native Czechoslovakia and won. This inspired her to go on. Her mother was her coach and encouraged her to continue with skating and ballet lessons.

Between her defection from Czechoslovakia at age 16 and her current position of searching for new talent all over the world, Aja starred for 13 years with the ice show. She is the only world champion that the Czechs ever produced. These days Aja does some television, including commercials, broadcasts for the Voice of America, and owns a new restaurant in New York, a wedding present from her husband Paul Steindler.

Unlike skating stars of the past, who were expected to be petite and wispy, Aja is a majestic 5-foot-8. While she doesn't have to watch her diet, she skates at a rink in the city and works out regularly in a private home gymnasium which her husband has built and equipped for her use. She has – and uses – a punching bag, an exercycle, an exercise ladder with a slant board which forces the muscles to gain tone by working against gravity, a reducing belt, and an upper-leg toner, a device which one straddles and works against a system of revolving cylinders. In addition, there is a sauna and a steam bath, and a scale.

Aja learned a lot from the professional cosmetic counseling she received during her years as an ice show headliner.

She had never worn false eyelashes until they became part of her makeup while performing, but she has worn them ever since. Aja prefers a light-weight lash in a medium shade of brown for daytime, and a darker, heavier ash on both upper and lower lids for evening.

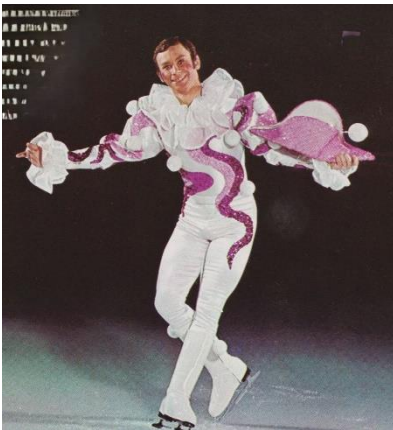
She said; "Since I'm a brunette, I find that I can wear heavier eye makeup without sacrificing that all important natural look. I prefer a wide-open, deep-set look and use a brownish gray liner, as black is too strong, even for a brunette. This is followed by two shades of shadow; white under the brow, and brown on the lid.

"I discovered that solid forms of foundation look quite natural when applied with a sponge; they are also less oily than other types of makeup bases, and don't require constant touch-ups with powder.

“My general rule for makeup is the ‘less you wear the better.’ I prefer the brush-ons for just a touch of color for the cheeks, and a soft beige or natural pink shade of lipstick suits me best.”

Another beauty accessory which she learned about while on stage are wigs and hairpieces. She has five full wigs, five falls and two braids. She likes then in her natural shade of brunette, but varies the style with her outfit.

## **Ice Capades Hypes Did It the Hard Way – 1970**



West Springfield – there are many ways to become an Ice Capades star. Walter Hypes did it the hard way – by skating his way up through the ranks. He is one of this season’s featured performers in Ice Capades which opens at the Eastern States Coliseum, for just 10 nights and eight matinees starting tonight. Accomplishing the difficult is not a new experience for Walter. He began skating at the age of 12 in his hometown of Los Angeles and within a year entered his first competition. Training was not easy for Hypes. It was necessary for him to work his way through skating lessons. His determination and dedication was tested

often, but he maintained to continue to rank high in Pacific Coast and National competitions from 1960-64.

For financial reasons, Hypes decided to cash in on his skating ability. He auditioned (as an understudy) for Ice Capades in 1966, and soon provide his tremendous versatility. Working hard between shows, he was spotted as a potential headliner and often substituted for featured skaters with sometimes as little as 10 minutes’ notice.

“That was the tough part,” explained 27-year-old Hypes. I had to be ready at all times to skate a variety of styles and play different characters while trying to develop a routine of my own.”

The ambitious Hypes studied jazz, ballet and modern dance techniques to create an individual skating style. “Skating is an art form today,” explained Hypes, who loves all forms of classical music and theatre. “In Ice Capades more music interpretation and character roll. It would seem that this hard work -playing is used than ever before. It’s more than just a sport.”

In the newest edition of Ice Capades, America’s No. 1 family show, is featured in two starring roles. It would seem that his hard work is paying off.

# Memories from the 2015 Reunion



[Click Here](#)

## **Ice Capades 2025 Reunion New Cruise Update Ahoy there Mateys!**

Attendee's list updated as of December 1, 2024

[Click here](#)

**For those attending –**



I am charging a \$45.00 party gift fee, payable to me in cash or check at registration at the hotel. It is for the bags, the surprise party gifts that go in them and the pizzas and salads at the pool party. I have paid for some out of my own pocket. J

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Johnna "J" Bates is HOSTING and COORDINATING.**

**APRIL 10th Cocktail Party - on land, at close/local hotel.**

**APRIL 11th CRUISE LEAVES** - Boarding generally begins at Noon, so plan to get to ship early, to get settled in your room. We'll be getting the party started early, while also starting to reconnect with friends!

**MORE DETAILS TO COME...** as the Event starts to come together!

**Payments for the Ice Capades -Escapades Cruise  
are due by January 10, 2025.**

**We'll have a good time** 🎵

**There is still time to join us! Contact Sheri at [scruises@aol.com](mailto:scruises@aol.com)  
(Payment information will need to be sent to her at the email above)**

Have you made your reservation yet?

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)

**'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/>

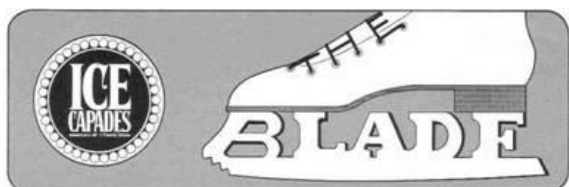
THIS EVENT IS BEING CREATED AND COORDINATED BY Johnna "J" Bates...

**NOTE: PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED!**

## **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!

## Answer to ‘Guess Who’?

1963 - Cliff MacGraham & the beautiful Tokiko Lepik

## Upcoming Events



CELEBRATING THE JOY  
OF DANCING ON ICE

Ice Theatre of New York, Inc<sup>®</sup>

presents

<https://www.icetheatre.org/>

Ice Theatre of New York's annual Winter Holiday Skating  
Celebration at Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park  
Saturday, December 14 at 4PM

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