



Sad News



Ronald Edwin "Ronnie" Burns, 72, of Oakland Park, FL, passed away peacefully on December 11, 2019 in the Holy Cross Hospital.

Ron was born in Philadelphia, PA on September 4, 1947. He is preceded in death by his parents, James and Hilda Burns.

Ron is survived by his partner of 18 years, Roy B. Stoutamyer III, and his four children, Samuel E. Burns, Steven M. Burns, Shawn P. Burns, and Stephanie L. Robinson, as well as 9 grandchildren.

Ron graduated from Abington High School, Abington, PA, in 1965, and from the Wilford Academy in Philadelphia, PA in 1966.

Throughout his career, Ron worked as a stylist, owner, manager and supervisor in the hair salon and retail business. He performed with the Ice Capades from 1966-1971. He enjoyed reading, going to the movies, Broadway musicals, and fine dining.

Ronnie's Celebration of Life will take place on Saturday January 18, 2020 at Tropics Grill, 2000 Wilson Dr. Wilton Manors, FL 33305 at 12 noon.

Ronald “Ronnie” Burns passed away on December 11, 2019 after a courageous four year battle with lung cancer. Ron was truly one of a kind. He had a smile that lit up the room and a laugh and an energy that was infectious. He had a sense of humor that was unparalleled. He was so funny, so sarcastic and so quick witted – you almost couldn’t keep up. He was fast with the quips and the one-liners and when you left a night with Ron, you left with your stomach hurting from laughing.

Ron was very stylish and a trend setter. He had excellent fashion sense and it spilled over into his fabulously decorated homes. He loved to read in his spare time and he was an EXCELLENT cook.

Ron was a hard worker and had a great work ethic. He was always prompt, because as we all know, “If you show up on time, you are already late.” He gave excellent advice, always giving the truth whether you wanted to hear it or not. But he gave you advice in such a way that it was a soft blow and you always listened when he spoke. He also never skimped on compliments and doled them out with abundance. He was very open with his affections, he loved hugs and he ALWAYS said I love you.

He was a family man and adopted 4 children at the age of 26. He, himself, was adopted as a baby and he was an only child, so he loved all the chaos at his boisterous loud family gatherings.

Ron will be truly missed as the world has lost some of its sparkle now. I know he is up there giving advice on hair and fashion and having a Manhattan with his Mom and Dad. ❤️

[Updated Reunion Information](#)



[Click here for all 80th Anniversary Reunion Information](#)

[Click here to see who's coming](#)



OUR ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

City Shaper: Elizabeth O'Donnell



[Click here for video](#)

O'Donnell started Gliding Stars to help people with disabilities learn how to skate & learn new skills.
Author: Kelly Dudzik – Dec. 23, 2019

TONAWANDA, N.Y. — We're celebrating the women who are making Western New York shine in our City Shapers reports this year. This week, 2 On Your Side's Kelly Dudzik shows us how a Western New York native is helping people with disabilities excel on the ice.

Elizabeth O'Donnell is the Founder and President of [Gliding Stars](#). O'Donnell grew up in Buffalo and lives in Hamburg.

O'Donnell started Gliding Stars more than forty years ago and was inspired by her childhood best friend's brother who was non-verbal. Gliding Stars is a skating program for people who are challenged by any type of disability. It's also a non-profit.

"I toured with the **Ice Capades**, I was in the World Professional Championships many years ago as a pro, and so skating I've done for ever and ever, and I realized as a young adult that it might be helpful for people with disabilities to learn how to skate," says O'Donnell.

Gliding Stars has grown to include thousands of families with chapters in five states.

"What's it like to see somebody just open up and their world comes alive when they're on the ice?" asked Dudzik.

"It makes your heart just flood with joy, you know, it's really cool. And, sometimes on the sling walker, a little kid will come that's never been able to move on their own, and the ice is slippery, so there's a viscosity of ice that's very different than the ground, and they'll get in this walker that completely supports their weight, we call it the sling seat, their little toe picks will get in the ice and all of the sudden, their little face goes, and they never moved before on their own, people are always moving them. That's really fun," says O'Donnell.

"What's the reaction like from the families?" asked Dudzik.

"Hope. You know? They have a sense of hope again because it's hard, I mean, the families they have these kids that go through surgery after surgery, and it's really hard for them, you know, so I have a lot of empathy for those families, and I'm happy to be able to help them in some way," says O'Donnell.

O'Donnell organizes fundraisers throughout the year and the big ice show in the spring. She also has an equipment company. Rinks across the country buy her walkers to make skating accessible to everyone.

"What kind of advice do you have for someone who wants to do what you're doing?" asked Dudzik.

"Go for it. Find something that speaks to your heart, and just don't be afraid," says O'Donnell.

Video of the Month

Jo Jo Starbuck & Ken Shelley - 1971 World Figure Skating Championships



The brilliant Jo Jo Starbuck and Ken Shelley bring some much needed pizzazz to the pairs event in 1971 at Lyon, France. Rodnina & Ulanov beat their main rivals Smirnova & Suraikin despite a huge error in the SP. (Incidentally, the 1971 Worlds SP is the only event portion that Rodnina did not win in her ten year reign as the Queen of pair skating.) Rumour had it they (R&U) were not speaking at all on the day of the LP and warmed up in icy silence. But JoJo and Ken did brilliantly

here to win the bronze medal and the crowd certainly enjoyed their advanced artistic skills. What a shame the judges didn't. Although judging by the shenanigans of Sapporo.

[Click here to view their LP](#)

Our Fantastic Ice Capets & Cadets



Chicago

Kathy Porter, Debbie Mason, Debbie Lorenzo, Brad Doud, June Eagleton-Heath, Laura Weber Petrovskis,
Stephanie Perom, Beth Weinstein Puzes, Lori Johnson, Ted Bogdanowicz

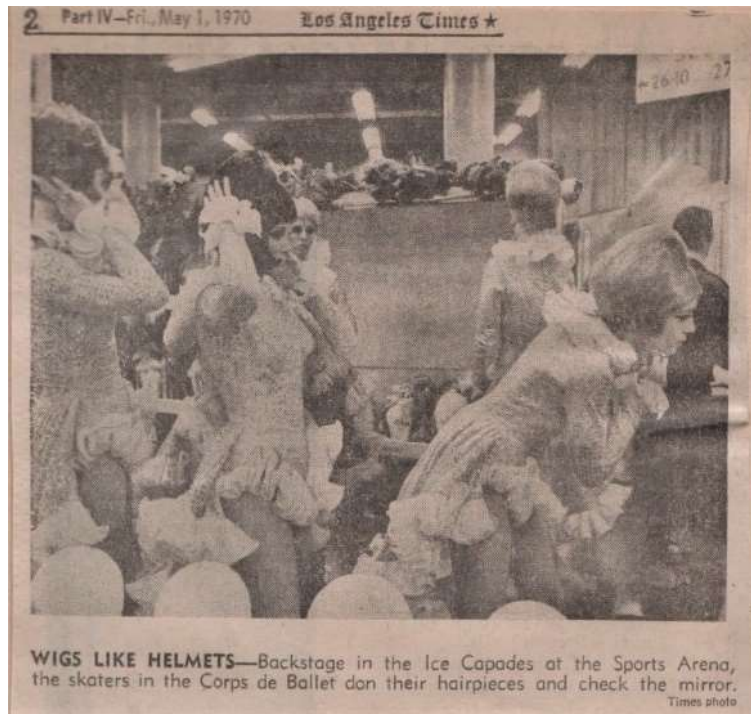
Ready for Any Emergency, Backstage at the Ice Capades

Reprinted from the LA Times – May 1, 1970, By Arlene Van Breems – Times Staff Writer

Year after year the Ice Capades moves from city to city. Tonight is the official opening night in Los Angeles. The skaters will be on ice at the Sports Arena through May 17th.

The 80 skaters have moved into hotels, apartments and sometimes their family homes for their stay – it is one of the longest runs they have.

Suitcases are as much a part of their lives as the skates they wear. Everything, almost, that cannot walk is on wheels – props, office file cabinets, wardrobes and massive wig containers.



NOT GLAMEROUS

Backstage, the Ice Capades is not a very glamorous place. Faces, heavy with stage makeup, look tired. The icy atmosphere is warmed by cups of coffee and short, sometimes terry cloth bathrobes worn between costumes.

Being close-up to the skaters makes their black and blue marks visible. It is easier to fall on the cement backstage than the ice out front. Rubber skate guards, rubberized mats and plywood boards keep them upright most of the time, but not always. Robert Daily, wardrobe supervisor, sits at his sewing machine on wheels making last minute adjustments on costumes. "Some of the prima donnas in the show get ideas at the last minute," said Daily.

Zippers break, and skaters sometimes need to be sewn into their costumes. Daily has two cupboards full of sewing necessities. "Drawers full of thread, hooks and eyes by the thousands and a big box of feathers – turkey, chicken, pheasant, you name it."

Wardrobe mistress Miss Lena DeCiantis has large safety pins fastened to the top of her apron. "The skaters' straps on their headpieces might be too long," she said.

Miss DeCiantis keeps one eye on the skaters and another on her staff of dressers, women hired in each city to help with the costumes.

"We must have 550 costumes in all, or it is 450-I'm not sure," said Miss DeCiantis. Each one is lined up according to the act in which it appears and also numbered to the skater who will wear it.

Headpieces affixed to wigs are numbered also. They are heavy, loaded with plastic flowers, feathered plumes, paste jewelry and sometimes bows.

The wig headpieces are the last part of the costume to go on the skater. Heavy and scratchy with almost strangling elastic fasteners, they are uncomfortable to wear.

Once ready, skaters line up in front of mirrors checking faces, wigs and smiles. One quick glance goes to check the seams of net stockings.

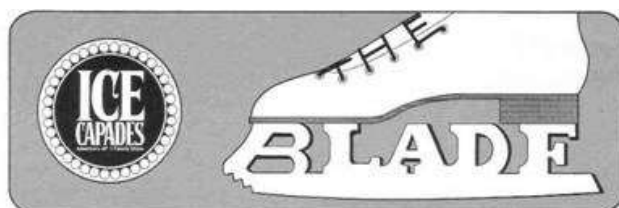
IN THE WINGS

Then they line up in the wings. The feature performers, oftentimes in scantier costumes, pace back and forth and practice turns on the small strip of ice behind the curtain.

“Moving helps to keep warm’ said Mitsuko Funakoshi, a featured performer who stars in two acts.

Los Angeles is her home town so her mother is backstage to visit before the show. This is her fifth year in the Ice Capades.

She enjoys the work and will continue for ‘as long as it is profitable,’ said Miss Funakoshi’. But I would like to settle down and become a housewife – a normal life sounds terrific to me now.’



The website, www.icecapadestheblade.com has been revamped and more information has been added. It's still a work in progress. If you have something to add, please send them.

Look here for **2020 Ice Capades Reunion** information, including the list of **who's coming**

Cast, Precision & Production Pictures – Relive some memories.

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



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

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