



## Sad News

### Evelyn Lexina McCall - Nov 3, 2021



Very sad to share the news that Evelyn McCall passed away. Evelyn has been a huge supporter of my Figure Skaters' Favorites cookbooks and contributed recipes and a great deal of encouragement for both volumes. She was a wonderful lady.

Evelyn skated with the **Ice Capades** in the 1950s. She went on to coach at Shelburn Figure Skating Club, Halifax Skating Club, Lunenburg Skating Club, Liverpool Skating, and Dartmouth Figure Skating Club in Canada. Her late son Rob McCall was a Canadian Ice Dance Champion and was a World and Olympic Bronze Medalist with ice dance partner Tracy Wilson. Evelyn was immensely proud of Rob and of all of her family.

Our sincere condolences go out to the entire McCall family and to all of Evelyn's friends throughout the skating community and beyond. We will miss hearing from her - she was a lovely lady.

### Myra Davis Garrett – November 7, 2021



It is with a heavy heart that I let you all know that my Mom, [Myra Davis](#) (Myra Garrett), passed away peacefully last night. She battled cancer like a warrior until the end. She loved her Ice Capades family and you all brought her so much joy. I am sure she was welcomed with open arms by those that went before her. I know she's in good company. My family will host a memorial in California after the beginning of the year and I will work with Ken Shook to make sure everyone is aware

when we begin to make plans. My Mom is now at peace. Let the show go on. – Leslie DuFresne

# Our Alumni in the News

## The pandemic has been a game changer for Barb Underhill, whose legacy with the Leafs goes beyond cleaner edges

By [Kevin McGran](#) Star Staff Reporter - Fri., Nov. 12, 2021

She's a world figure skating champion with two Stanley Cup rings, a trailblazer in opening doors for women in positions of hockey power.

But when COVID-19 struck and her first granddaughter was born, Barb Underhill's priorities changed immediately. The baby, Maisy, was taken immediately to the Hospital for Sick Children and put on life support.



"Right away, our life just stopped," says Underhill. "She was just the centre of my thoughts and our life every single day."

Maisy is doing well now — "She's our miracle baby" — and two more grandkids arrived during the pandemic.

"The perspective that gave me during COVID, just wanting to be with my family during (the pandemic), to just be there for them," she says. "It really was a very difficult time, but it was also a time of great perspective for me."

So when hockey came back, Underhill informed the [Maple Leafs](#), who helped her blaze that trail by [hiring her 10 years ago](#), that she was moving on.

She'll remain a coaching consultant with the Tampa Bay Lightning, who brought her aboard 11 years ago, but working for the Leafs as well — a combination that went from summertime work to year-round — was simply too much. Underhill and husband Rick Gaetz also recently sold their share of the Guelph Storm, the 2019 OHL champions.

"I've been struggling with this for a while," she says. "When I started, it wasn't a big deal because the job was mainly working in the off-season. But things have changed and the demands of the role have become greater. It got to a point where I knew I had to make a decision and I just needed a pullback."

Leafs defenceman Morgan Rielly is among those [missing Underhill](#).

"I always looked forward to being on the ice with her," says Rielly, one of Underhill's prized students. "It was just cool to talk to her about other ideas that were rolling around in her brain, and other areas that she had in mind that players could improve on, and new moves that you could implement into your game."

Rielly was already a good skater when the Leafs drafted him fifth overall in 2012, but Underhill got him to work on his core and balance, and change to a more upright posture: “To be more on top of his skates versus, like, bending so far forward. I remember looking at the video with him and he said, ‘Wow, I look so much taller.’”

Watch how Rielly carries the puck along the blue line during a power play. Underhill would suggest “a different way that you could change direction, or you could evade a defender,” says Rielly. “Or be deceptive when you’re going back for a puck into the corner. Different ways you could use your edges to beat that first forechecker.”

Underhill’s work with [some slow-footed prospects](#) is also well documented.

Mason Marchment, now with the Florida Panthers, is a prime example. And Frederik Gauthier, now in New Jersey, might not have made the NHL without her skating smarts.

Her journey from figure skating to hockey started with a part share of the Storm. Then-coach Dave Barr invited Underhill to work with his teenage players.

“I remember getting on the ice and it was like a lightning bolt, just realizing that that’s what I wanted to do,” says Underhill. “I wanted to be back on the ice. I’d been off the ice for 10 years and I wanted to be back on the ice.

“I became obsessed with figuring out the science of it, figuring out what principles I could take from figure skating and apply them to make them better hockey players.”

Hockey players generally accept that figure skaters are better on blades. Sabres forward Jeff Skinner, one of the best skaters in the NHL, started out as a figure skater. Leafs centre John Tavares had long worked with Dawn Braid, a national-level figure skater, as a personal coach. She was later hired by the Arizona Coyotes.

First the Lightning, with Steve Yzerman at the helm, came calling for Underhill, then the Maple Leafs under Brian Burke. [Dave Poulin](#) — then Burke’s assistant general manager, and a smooth skater himself as an NHLer after starting out in figure skating — loved the idea.

“Her energy level was so great,” says Poulin, now a TSN hockey analyst and contributing columnist for the Star. “It’s about making people better. And she brought all the energy and all the enthusiasm, but she also made people better.”

Underhill credits all of them with being ahead of their time, bringing women into prominent roles in the world’s top men’s league. At the job interview, she says he expected to walk into a “stuffy boardroom” with men in suits.

“It wasn’t at all like that,” she recalls. “This was a very forward-thinking room, and the way they brought me in and embraced me and gave me whatever I needed to do what I wanted to do, they supported me 100 per cent all of the way.”

Poulin says there were no qualms at the time about hiring a woman for the job.

“We had different females in different roles at that time. Certainly Dana Sinclair (a psychologist) was a significant part of the group. But from a coaching standpoint, that was another step. But it was across the board on (Underhill). There was no hesitation in terms of doing something different like that at all.”

Rielly says Leafs players have never had an issue with gender.

“As far as her being a woman, that had nothing to do with it,” he says. “Her knowledge for her sport, and the way that she translated that knowledge into what we were trying to accomplish, was very seamless.

“Right from the first time you talk to her, you can tell that there was a wealth of knowledge coming your way and it was coming fast. The expectation was that you were going to work hard, you were going to try to be a sponge and take it all in and improve every time you spent time on the ice with her.”

Underhill officially left the Leafs a week ago. She’s been mentoring her replacement, Randi Milani.

“I taught her my principles and taught her all my methods,” says Underhill. “She’s really taken all of my teachings and put her own spin on it. I was watching her actually with [Austin Matthews](#) when he was returning from his (wrist) injury, and I was blown away right at how far she’s come in a very short time.”

Underhill’s legacy is more than getting players to work on their edges. Prominent women such as [Hayley Wickenheiser and Danielle Goyette](#) — now player development executives with the Leafs — have followed through the door she helped open.

“I do know that things have definitely opened up for women,” says Underhill, “and I also know that the two worlds of figure skating and hockey have really come together. And obviously, the NHL and hockey players are much more open to working with figure skaters. So it’s really changed dramatically.

“I kind of just happened to be in the right place at the right time, and had a passion for it.”



## REUNION UPDATE

**MEMORABILIA TRADE, SELL and SHOW & TELL - HAPPY HOUR!** (Wednesday afternoon)

Do you have some old special items or photos or sketches, you'd love to show/share with others? Or do you have old but in good condition Ice Capades clothing that you'd be willing to sell or give to a friend or fellow skater?

We'll be celebrating early afternoon Wednesday, with a Memorabilia - Happy Hour (about 1 ½ hrs.).

1. **Would love you to bring items you want to share**, programs, photos, other souvenirs – that you may want to sell or trade as well. (2-3 people per table)
2. Photo albums, or other kinds of memory books/scrapbooks, would be fun to see too!
3. Feel free to place items not for sale in Ziplock bags, as not to get confused with what you might be willing to trade or sell.
4. All money's earned are yours, should you decide to sell any of your treasures.

This should be a fun opportunity to see what people have saved over the years. Perhaps you have some things you would like to pass down to a younger generation? Personally, I was just gifted from a skater, some small very unique trinkets from 1948 and 1958. I was floored by the uniqueness of the pieces. Some amazing things out there.

Hoping a good handful will want to participate. You must reach-out to us and sign up in advance, so we know how many tables we will need. **Deadline for this will be Wednesday, May 27, 2020.** Additional spots *may be* available at event, but no guarantees of placement. Let's make this a fun happy hour. Yes, we will have a cocktail bar.

To sign up, write [IceCapadesReunion@outlook.com](mailto:IceCapadesReunion@outlook.com)

## Videos of the Month

20 Strict Rules The Rockettes Dancers have to follow.



What, no holds!! Doesn't matter whether it's rehearsing for the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall or rehearsing for a new season at the Ice Capades, the dedication is the same. There is one difference between the Rockette's kickline hold and an Ice Capades kickline hold. See if you can find it at the 5 minute mark. Do you think we could have done this and kept a straight line?

[https://youtu.be/PNF\\_4CNTX48](https://youtu.be/PNF_4CNTX48)





A special Happy Birthday greeting to our forever young 'Mr. Debonair' who recently celebrated another birthday on Nov. 18th. Here he is at a special ITNY Gala in 2021 in his honor with some very special Dwyer girls.

[Click here to enjoy the memory](#)

## Memories - Cast Pictures

The University of Moscow in Moscow. Russia, was on tour agenda for Ice Capades Principals and Cast. Left to right: Sharon La Flare, Diana Almond, Eric Wahl, Ed McCormick, Susan Hubick, John Coburn, Bill Randolph, Evelyn Moore, Lauralee Art, Gloria Clements, John Bates, George Verbitski, Lucerne Meyer.



1961 Moscow

1964 Hawaii





1965



1966



1967



**NEW DATES for the Ice Capades Reunion – June 14, 15, 16, 2022, at the stunning and spacious OMNI Resort & Spa, Rancho Mirage (Palm Springs), CA.**

**If already registered**, your event registration will be transferred to June 2022! While it may seem to be a long wait The Ice Capades Reunion 2022 committee is still excited and committed to providing a fun experience, in what could very well be the last chance to gather ‘this many’ of us in one spot. Please save any requests for cancellations, for extreme personal situations only. Much appreciated.

**If you already have a hotel reservation**, know the OMNI Resort has moved all reservations over to the new date(s). Feel free to call and confirm, to ease your mind. The 2022 OMNI Resort Reservation Website is not up yet. Know they are working on a skeleton crew, but I am told the



website will be Live in a few days. Info regarding the new OMNI Resort website will be posted soon. Our hotel rates, will remain the same in 2022.

We are all getting older. (Still glamorous, but older). And after all this Covid-19 craziness it will be so good to see old friends again! So, please make a plan to come join us, and fully enjoy this special, unique reunion!

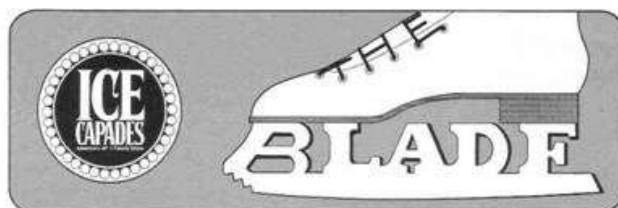
[Click here for 2022 registration form, which can be printed out](#)

Click here to register: [New Hotel Reservation Link](#)

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS UPDATE FROM STEPHANIE...** Here's who the OMNI Resort & Spa has reservations for - in 2022! If you have made a reservation for 2020 or 2021, *but your name is not here*, please call the hotel with your Confirmation Number to be sure your reservation has been changed to 2022. They feel confident all reservations have been moved... but please check if your name is not here, and you know you already made a reservation. Remember to use our Code to get our Special Rate: **061422Capade** Thank you! Sorry for any confusion.

Questions: -- Stephanie Perom, Event Producer, (310) 962-5908 -Cell, [IceCapadesReunion@outlook.com](mailto:IceCapadesReunion@outlook.com)

[CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT WHO'S COMING TO OUR REUNION...](#)



The website, [www.icecapadestheblade.com](http://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 **2022 Ice Capades Reunion** information, including the list of **who's coming**

**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



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

**Ice Theatre of New York**

**Presents *Edge Class***

**Wednesdays through December 22, 2021**

**City Ice Pavilion**

[Click here for more information](#)

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