

Sad News

Leo Brink – May 18, 2022



It's unfortunate to lose another member of our family. The information from the funeral home doesn't give much information but if you would like to leave a message for the family, [click here](#)

Brad Doud – April 21, 2022

Lois King shares some fond memories of Brad Doud



Rehearsals were underway in Bakersfield, the first time Brad and I met. He a principal and I a first year chorus girl.

One night at dusk, he pulled into the parking space below my 2nd floor room. I was out taking in the sunset when he looked up and said "hi".

Later he told me, that in that moment, he thought it a good idea to get to know me. I confessed to thinking, "there's that guy who can't skate very well...always falling down. How does he keep his job?".

Without hesitation, his easy manner gave way to a deep belly laugh. I liked him immediately.



His Mr. Debonair act preceded Kiddy number and I opened Kiddy number from front ice. So, every night I was able to watch Brad as Mr. Debonair. To this day, whenever I hear "As Time Goes By", in my mind I hear the hush of the arena, the sound of his blades biting the ice, the gasps as he "trips over the dash". I see the spot following his elegant form.

We also worked together outside of Ice Capades. For Ron Urban Productions. A small show that spent the summer in beautiful Lake George, NY.

Some years later, I was in Vegas with a friend who had also skated with Brad but did not know him. Over drinks she was, in fact, quite star struck by him. She confessed to feeling disbelief that she was sitting at the same table as Brad Doud, an icon of Ice Capades. I looked at Brad and said "Brad, you're an icon and all this time I thought you were just Brad!" (In jest, because of course I knew he was an icon of Ice Capades but his discomfort at being fawned over by my friend needed some redirection).

He was funny, compassionate, classy and kind. Possessing a timeless cool. A gentle soul who made people laugh and be amazed. The world was a better place with him in it and he will be sorely missed.

[Click here to enjoy this video of Brad doing what he does best](#)

Ric Prada – April 2, 2022



It is with broken hearts & deepest sorrow that the family of Ricardo "Rico" Parada wish to share the passing of a much loved brother and Uncle. Brother Richito to his little sister, Uncle Ric to his many nieces and nephews, left us on April 2, 2022, passing away peacefully in his home to join his beloved parents, big sister Norma Jean, brother-in-law Robert Berroteran and nephew Daniel Berroteran in God's Heavenly Kingdom.

Born September 4th 1927 to Leopoldo "Battling Chico" (Mexico's Welter Weight Champion, 1927) and Margarita Gurrola Parada, here in El Paso, he created cherished, childhood memories with his sisters, growing up along with the city of his birth.

A graduate of Austin High, class of 1947, he attend Texas College of The Mines which is today UTEP where he was majoring in Architectural Engineering. But with the looming threat of the Korean War decided to enlist in the United States Navy, 1948. Assigned to the USS Atlanta out of Seattle, he received orders to transfer to San Diego, serving as an Honor Man with his company. It was there that fate would acquaint him with a shipmate whose mother sent her son ice skates from home, which said son promptly offered to Ric, and otherwise would have been disposed of in the nearest trash receptacle. Being a West Texas native, adventuresome and willing to try just about anything life threw his way, he found an ice rink not far from the Naval Base and taught himself to skate.

His stay in CA would also lead him to study Flamenco where he was encouraged by Rita Lupino, sister of Ida, whom he had met at Nicko's Dance Studio on Wilshire Blvd. in Hollywood to pursue a career in Flamenco dancing. His dream was to travel to Spain to continue lessons in Flamenco, but traveling across the Atlantic would require financing which meant he needed a job. Landing in NYC, working at Hunts Building Marts, drawing and designing kitchens for their clients, skating in the evenings at the famous Rockefeller Center, it was here that he would audition for **Ice Capades** in 1957. He would be hired as a "Dance" Skater and thus found himself with a career that would take him around the world from Russia to Australia and more, for the next 17 years.

Before receiving the telegram informing him he was to sign a 3 year contract to skate, he left Hunts, returned to El Paso to form a dance troupe with Lita Candela but it was short lived as the telegram from Ice Capades came shortly thereafter that drew him away from his family and home town once more.

Travel weary, he retired from the "show" to return to El Paso to assist with the care of his elderly father until "Battling Chico" fought his biggest and last battle, passing in 1975. Never to be idle, he taught Flamenco lessons, was very involved with Viva Mexico, became certified as a masseuse, continued to use his skills as a draftsman in architecture and taught skating lessons at the El Paso Rhinos practice facility until the age of 82.

Service was held at Del Angel Central in El Paso Texas on Monday, April 18th 2022. He's was laid to rest at Fort Bliss National Cemetery. This wonderful man will be greatly missed.

Our Alumni in the News

Karen Ingram Vance: Ice Capades' First African American Performer

Karen Ingram Vance became the first African American skater to perform with the Ice Capades in 1967 and later performed alongside "Mr. Debonair" with the Ice Follies.

Article Skater Spotlight Tuesday, May 3, 2022



By Jillian L. Martinez

Skating trailblazer Mabel Fairbanks left New York for Los Angeles in the 1940s. The Black and Seminole skater turned coach sought more opportunities for herself and fellow skaters of color to pursue the sport with less racism and prejudice. Over a decade later, up the coast in San Francisco, another Black skater named Karen Ingram Vance would become enamored with ice shows and eventually make her own mark in the sport. In 1967, Vance became the first African American skater to perform with the **Ice Capades**.



A newspaper clipping highlighting Karen Ingram Vance's talent on ice.

"Ice Follies used to have a home base in San Francisco, so as a child, my parents would take me to see the shows," Vance shared of her beginnings with skating. "One day, when I was about 10 years old, I told my parents I wanted to take skating lessons."

Throughout her childhood, Vance took jazz, ballet and tap dance lessons, as well as cello and violin lessons. When she decided to add skating to her activities, it was purely for fun. According to Vance, she never had goals to become a competitor or a performer. However, Vance naturally took to the sport, and it was not long until skating became more than "just a hobby."

"The thing was, I loved to skate," Vance said. "I couldn't go to the ice rink enough."

In 1958, Vance had three ice rinks in the Bay Area from which she could choose to take lessons. The Ingram family chose the Phyllis and Harris Legg Skating School, run by the retired husband-wife Ice Follies' team known for their performances on stilt skates. Unlike Fairbanks, who was denied access to her local rink due to her race, Vance was welcomed by the Leggs.

"Phyllis and Harris Legg were both very genuine," Vance said. "[Phyllis] was really a warm person and always had a smile on her face. I never felt any prejudice or discrimination."

In fact, Vance recalls other students of color being enrolled in skating lessons alongside her.

"We had a little bit of everything," Vance referenced to the diversity of races at the Legg Skating School. Alongside Vance, there were fellow African American skaters enrolled in the school, in addition to Asian and Hispanic skaters.

Uniquely, the Legg Skating School was not sanctioned and, consequently, could not allow its skaters to compete. Instead, Vance and her peers were trained to perform in skating shows. Harris was a record holder in barrel jumping, and Phyllis produced the historic annual Christmas show at the San Francisco Emporium department store. Along with her performances at Emporium, Vance skated with the Leggette Precision Group's shows at the Cow Palace and Oakland Coliseum before ultimately auditioning for the Ice Capades.

“I was in junior college when I decided I wanted to go into [Ice Capades]. I had seen other girls I skated with go into the show, and I thought I wanted to go, as well,” said Vance, a physical education major at the time. “My coach called Ice Capades; [production assistant] Bill Bain came up from Hollywood; I auditioned and I was pretty much accepted immediately.”



Various newspaper clippings featuring Vance.

Vance made her debut with the Ice Capades on Nov. 16, 1967, at the Fresno Convention Center and gained the attention of the media as the first African American skater to sign to the major ice shows. For nearly two years, Vance was a part of the Ice Capades West family. Together, they toured 38 cities across the U.S. and Canada during the course of 42 weeks.

In 1969, Vance told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, “The other kids judge me on how well I skate, not my color.”

Much like her time at the Leggs Skating School, Vance was welcomed and accepted.

“It was an exciting time! I enjoyed the skating, the traveling, the friendships. ...Every time I went out [on the ice], I was doing something I loved.”

Tragically, on the evening April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated at his hotel in Memphis. When news reached the Ice Capades performers, they were preparing to travel to Little Rock, Arkansas, for their next show. Concerned for the unrest erupting across the nation, the Ice Capades adjusted travel plans to ensure safety for their skaters.

“It was scary because you didn’t know what to expect,” Vance said. “Some of the cities we were supposed to travel through were in an uproar. We flew part of the way and took a bus part of the way. My parents were very concerned and contacted the managers to make sure I would be fine. And, then, my grandmother and aunt and uncle drove from Texas to Little Rock to make sure I was OK.”

Following MLK’s assassination, Vance was on higher alert when traveling and out in public, but she continued to have the support of her Ice Capades peers. In 1969, during her third season with Ice Capades, Vance decided to stop performing with the show. After returning to San Francisco for three years, Vance returned to show business – this time with Ice Follies. Hired by Richard Dwyer, better known as “Mr. Debonair,” Vance performed at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

“We were the opening act for [dancer and singer] Joey Heatherton and, later, Diana Ross,” Vance said. “It was really a lot of fun. People treated us like movie stars.”

Once Vance’s contract with Ice Follies concluded, she decided to hang up her skates and make a new career for herself. After her departure from skating, Vance worked for United Airlines for 27 years until she retired as a manager; became a manager at Asian Art Museum of San

Francisco; and served as a wedding coordinator. Today, she considers herself “finally retired.” She is a wife, mother and grandmother who loves to cook and drive her grandsons to/from school and their extracurricular.

“No, I’m not an Olympic skater by any means but I did progress and did quite well. ‘Once upon a time, Karen Ingram was the first Black skater to join a major skating company.’ I did a little something along the way,” Vance humbly said. “I rarely ever skate now. Although, skating will always be in my heart and a part of me.”

Special Video Memories



Torvill & Dean entertained the crowd with their 30th anniversary rendition of Bolero. They are still timeless.

[Bolero, 2022 version](#)

Relive some of their routines from Dancing on Ice

[You’ve got a Friend in Me](#)

[Bridge over Troubled Waters](#)

REUNION UPDATE - June

The Ice Capades Reunion party is quickly approaching - JUNE 14, 15 and 16! We are getting so excited to see everyone!!!

The OMNI Las Palmas Resort & Spa, in Rancho Mirage/Palm Springs, CA, is the perfect property for this getaway Reunion. What better gift to give yourself after the last 2 1/2 years? So many of us are looking forward to having a chance to catch up with friends. Hoping we get to see you too!

[Click here for Registration form](#)

Can't Join Us All Three Days? For those that can only get away for a day, or perhaps you are only a drive away - consider joining us for the day/evening, or maybe 2 days?

SINGLE TICKETS Now Available on our Website.

Welcome Reception \$125

Social & Dance Party (& Memorabilia Party, afternoon) \$145

Evening Gala (& film THE FABULOUS ICE AGE, afternoon) \$225

Register in Advance, so you get a Tshirt, and our Welcome Bag.

If coming for the Gala only, would be great if we also knew in Advance what Protein you want for dinner?

<https://www.eventinterface.com/ice-capades-2020-reunion/>

We have 3 main events for you to enjoy. Our **Welcome Party on Tuesday Night** begins at 5p. **Wednesday Night - Social & Dance Party**, begins at 6:30p. **Thursday Night - Our Gala**, the Reception starts at 6p. There will be plenty of opportunities for dancing too... of course.

After collecting your Registration package, you'll have a chance to collect a Raffle Ticket. We're having a **Delicious Raffle happening at our Welcome Party!** You'll have a *Chance to Win a Gift Certificate* from these generous businesses, *The Cheesecake Factory, Eight4Nine Restaurant & Lounge, P.F. Chang's, Babe's Bar-B-Que, ACQUA California Bistro, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory*, or even a... 2 Nights Stay – at The OMNI Las Palmas Resort & Spa. (*Can be used for this stay.*)

Morning hours you'll have a chance to Walk with a group at 7a, or a different group at 8a, or take a 'gentle' yoga class instead out on the lawn at 8a. A little later in the a.m., we'll have a stretch class, which will be followed by an easy, fun dance class, taught by our own Lori Johnson. Or perhaps consider hitting the golf course (list of interested parties are on FB, but we can send you info), or borrow a racket and enjoying the tennis courts (list of those interested are also on FB). Of course, there are also spa treatments to consider taking advantage of.

Wednesday afternoon, we'll also be hosting a **SHOW & TELL – MEMORABILIA EXCHANGE PARTY**, so bring your travelable memorabilia items, jackets, photo albums, trinkets, programs - to trade, show, or sell, or giveaway. All \$ Yours from any sales. You Are Responsible For Your Own Treasures. Sign up for table space, after checking-in to event at Registration Area. Hoping to see some fun items.

Thursday late morning we'll be gathering for our **Group Shot**. Later, after the Group Shot, and your lunch, come join us near our Registration area – as we pay homage to the creators of the beautiful costumes that made the 60's and other years shine. We'll then present "**THE FABULOUS ICE AGE**" right after the costume designers presentation. So please come inside, and stay cool and relax with us, and watch the movie, or simply continue to socialize in our general area.

REMEMBER: If you have at least 6 of your friends excited about coming - and you all want to sit together for dinner (up to 8 or 10) - let me know, by Sunday, May 22nd. We will hold a Table, but understand we will also allow for others to join your Table at the event, if not a full table of 10 people.

To Reserve the Table: Simply designate a **Table Host**, and that person should email us (icecapadesreunion@outlook.com) your list of the 6, 8 or 10 "paid/registered" attendees.

The Table Host will be the designated (only) person to change the names at the Table.

Hosts - please remember to check with each person to be sure they know they are sitting at your specific Table (to avoid being placed at two tables).

For those not participating in this promotion, there will be a "limited number" of Table Sign-ups available in the Registration Area at Check-In! There will also be plenty of Open Seating too.

This luxury resort is very spacious and airy, and our events are mostly outside. There are lots of large sun umbrellas, and shade provided everywhere. **We have 4 Cabanas secured, as well as the pool has lots of chairs, and there's even a Floating River!** Please remember to bring sunscreen, and possibly a good hat!

REGARDING COVID: *OMNI Resort COVID requests and guidelines, must be respected. Please bring quality face masks to wear, whether the resort requires it in public spaces or not, just in case. We will also provide masks at check in, if you need one. Hoping you will be vaccinated, and boosted. But know, we will not be checking for vaccine status.*

Please respect that some of our registrants may not want to take off their masks, shake hands, maybe even hug. Please respect their wishes. And of course, please... if not feeling well, please do not come. To feel confident of your own health, we recommend you get a COVID test at home a few days before heading out.

The OMNI Resort and surrounding areas, are beautiful. If you have never been to Palm Springs, it's very special... and Rancho Mirage is even prettier. You may want to consider coming in a day or two early, or even staying an extra day or two. It's so relaxed there, with stunning, beautiful views, and of course wonderful shopping and sights to see... and yes, gambling nearby as well. This promises to be a fun get-away, from everyday life.

Still need to book your hotel? Don't forget to use our **Discount code: 061420Capade**

<https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/palm-springs-rancho-las-palmas/meetings/ice-capades-reunion-2022-06142022>

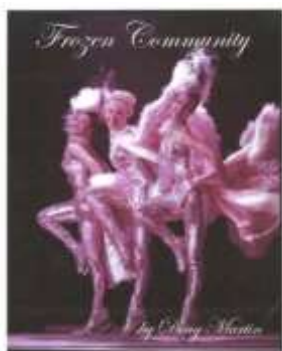
Looking forward to partying with everyone! It's going to be a fun-filled few days. Hope you will plan on joining us!

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

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

Updated 5/25/2022

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.

In honor of **Ric Prada**, Doug shared this very funny story about Ric & Aja.

While I'm talking about personalities in the show, I can't go any further without mentioning Ric Prada, a slim, talented Hispanic Chorus skater who could make you laugh even if you were having a lousy day. One of the things Ric did almost daily to make us laugh was to pretend to have broken his makeup mirror. He usually dressed in the Principals' dressing room – don't ask me why – and would take two or three minutes setting up a 'pretend' makeup mirror. He'd put the makeup on his face and neck and smooth it all out as if he could see everything he was doing. Then he'd proceed to put on all the eye lines with the makeup pencil and do his eyebrows too. It was amazing to watch, and you couldn't help wonder how he could put on his makeup without a mirror, night after night, and do as good a job than most of the glamour girls who were part of the show.

I also must say a little more about Aja Zanova, a truly memorable skater from Czechoslovakia. She was one of the great Principals in Ice Capades from 1954 – 1972, but I'm going to focus on the mid – 1960's. We used to do a couple of opera numbers that our audiences loved. The number that Aja was starring in had the shortest girls from the Chorus line backing her up as she skated, and posing by the front of the set. As I said before, performers leaving the ice would exit through tunnels on the extreme right or left edges of the stage.

One night, one of the cast members decided to have a little fun with Aja's introduction announcement, which lasted nearly a minute, and always ended with '...twice World Champion, Aja Zanova!'. That night, as the announcer was nearing the end of Aja's intro and was just about to say her name, the fast member, who was just leaving the ice, yelled out, 'King Kong'. The lights came up on this *very tall woman* surrounded by these *very short backup skaters*, and the audience began to laugh. Well, I can tell you all hell broke loose when she finished her number and went looking for the guy who'd ruined her intro. I'm pretty sure he'd have been fired – if

they could have figured out who it was, but it's still a mystery to this day. That's a memory a lot of people still talk about.

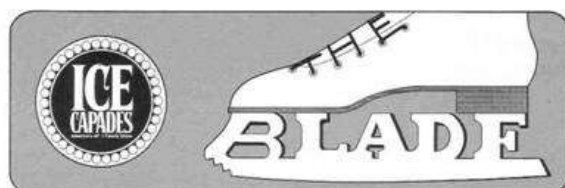
USFA is Looking for Skaters



US Figure Skating for the Centennial Year is reaching out to find and connect former and current members who skated any time in USFS history to reconnect. Please consider registering!!! Share with those skating friends you stay in touch with!!

I can imagine some fun reconnecting events!!!

[Click here for more information](#)



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 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



CELEBRATING THE JOY
OF DANCING ON ICE

Ice Theatre of New York, Inc[®]

presents

www.icetheatre.org

If you know if someone who would like to receive The Blade, please send me their email address or if you would like to be removed from receiving The Blade, please type 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

Email me directly at gspoden@rogers.com