

REUNION EDITION

NEWS FROM ICE CAPADES ALUMNI

June 2023

Sad News

Dianne Palmer Walker – May 4, 2023



Dianne Walker, a beloved mother, sister, grandmother, and dedicated RN, passed away peacefully on Thursday, May 4, 2023, surrounded by her loving family in Lawton. She was 71 years old.

No services are scheduled at this time.

Dianne was born on Nov. 8, 1951, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Richard (Dick) H. Palmer and Rita Dallas Palmer. Her parents were both part of the Ice Capades, and as a child, Dianne enjoyed skating with other performers before and after shows. She was even employed for a while selling tickets in Atlantic City. Dianne was also an accomplished speed skater

and won several first-place medals in competitions.

After attending trade college, Dianne earned her LVN certification and worked for several plastic surgeons. Her passion for water skiing led her to spend many summers in Minnesota with her extended family, including grandparents and cousins.

In the 1980s, Dianne became a Tupperware salesperson and later sold insurance with Primerica Financial Services. As a single mother, she went to school in the mid-90s to become a paramedic. It was during this time that she began working for Kirk's Emergency Services and made many friends along the way. She always had great stories to tell of Kirk and Betty.

Around 2003, Dianne graduated from Rose State College as an RN and began working at Southwestern Medical Center as an ER nurse. After a few years, she began working as a travel nurse and even went to California to assist in taking care of her parents. In 2013, she moved back to Lawton, where she built a new home and spent time with her kids and grandkids. She continued to work as an RN until 2021 and even taught some nursing classes.

Dianne is survived by her two sons: Matt Walker and his wife Jenn, and Michael Walker and his wife Nikki; her sister Pattie Mackie and her husband Bob, as well as her grandchildren Amaya Walker and Zaylee Augusta.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her grandson Austin Walker, and her niece Melissa Mackie.

Dianne will always be remembered for her kind and caring heart, her love for her family, her joy of cooking, and her dedication to her work as an RN. She touched the lives of many through her work and personal relationships, and she will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

An online guest book and sympathy cards are available at

https://www.swoknews.com/obituaries/dianne-walker/article_747239c2-ec3d-57fc-a717-838b100af3ce.html

Lois Virginia “Ginny” Reel – Nov. 18, 2022



Age 91 of Franklin Park, PA, died on Friday, November 18, 2022, in Gambrills, Maryland. Ginny was born in Pittsburgh on March 15, 1931, and was the daughter of the late David and Helen Weigle Barker. Ginny was a professionally trained figure skater and was invited to tour with the **Ice Capades** upon graduation from West View High School. She enjoyed traveling and performing with the Ice Capades throughout the U.S. and Canada for several years. Upon her marriage to Watson "Huck" Reel, she raised her family in Franklin Park. She was an avid gardener and enjoyed knitting, sewing, and embroidery. She

is survived by her daughter Jennifer Brancato (Anthony); her grandchildren, Alexander and Ainsley Brancato; and many nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her husband, Watson A. Reel II; her brother, Walter Barker; and sister, Doloras Bergmark. A private family ceremony will be held at the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies on Friday, May 19, 2023.

Alumni in the News

Going Bananas with Ian Jenkins

Interview with Albert Lucas



Ian's guest for this episode is one of the most successful and celebrated jugglers the world has ever seen - **Albert Lucas**. With more than 50 years (and counting) performing at the very highest level, and still breaking world records. Listening to Albert, and his approach to every sport he has ever done is a true testament on how best to succeed and prolong one's career.

<https://youtu.be/cECjRjHLxRg>

Upcoming Event

Ice Capades 2025 Reunion Cruise Announcement

'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...

PLEASE GET YOUR \$100 DEPOSIT IN ASAP TO SECURE YOUR SPACE. Please Note: Deposit, is Non-Refundable.

I would like to advise you of TRIP CANCELLATION and INTERRUPTION INSURANCE - it's your individual choice. Reach out to: www.allianztravelinsurance.com.

NOTE: PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED!

Here are CABIN/CRUISE RATES based on Double Occupancy which include taxes, fees and gratuities. (Rm. Rates Does Not include your beverages nor their gratuities.) I'm trying to make it so that there are no hidden surprises when we disembark.

Rates are bound to go up between now, and 2025. Get your deposit in to secure your Cabin Rate.

Spacious Balcony: (bigger cabin space) \$703.77

Balcony: \$582.77

Ocean View: \$517.77

Inside Cabin: \$470.77

(Please note, these prices do not include the hotel. We'll get there soon)

TO SECURE YOUR CABIN AND CABIN RATES, and place your \$100.00 deposit, please contact Sheri as soon as you can at (914) 420-7808. You can also email her at scruses@aol.com. TELL HER that you are with the ICE CAPADES GROUP.

Cruise Itinerary

Ship starts boarding at noon time on Friday 4/11,

Sails at 4:30p - Arrives in Nassau at 7:00 am

Leaves at 9:00 pm - Arrives at Coco Cay at 7:00am

Ship Leaves at 5:00 pm - Arrives back in Fort Lauderdale at 7:00 am.

ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES are ending their 3 day cruises out of Fort Lauderdale in April, 2025. Sooo..

In an effort to make sure no one "misses the boat" -- there will be an opportunity to enjoy a cocktail party, with a jazz group the Thursday night before at a nearby hotel.

Fort Lauderdale airport is VERY close to the Port and will be close to the hotel that I decide upon. I believe we'll be able to board around Noon time on the Friday.

Also, for those who live in colder weather - you'll probably be ready for some warmer weather! ☀️☀️☀️ Ty "J" ❤️

Questions: Contact 'J' directly - dabatej@bellsouth.net

Video of the Month

Scott Hamilton – Ice Capades 1988 – In the Mood



https://fb.watch/kDCc7-pD_n/?mibextid=6aamW6

Pictures of the Month

Aja Zanova



Was a Czech figure skater who represented Czechoslovakia in competition. Vrzáňová is the 1949 & 1950 World champion and 1950 European champion.

World War II, Vrzáňová started figure skating. The training conditions were difficult, as she had to skate in early winter mornings. Her training sessions were held in darkness because of the dim-out regulations. She skated at the open Štvanice Stadium before the sessions for hockey players, or at the CLTK club tennis courts, which were flooded with water and frozen.

In 1946, Vrzáňová became the Czechoslovak junior national champion. In early 1947, she moved to Richmond, London to be coached by Arnold Gerschwiler. In 1947, she won the Czechoslovak national championships and placed 7th at the 1947 World Figure Skating Championships.

Vrzáňová represented Czechoslovakia at the 1948 Winter Olympics.

In 1949, Vrzáňová was awarded the silver medal at the European Championships in Milan and won her first World title in Paris. She seized her chance to win the gold medal as the Olympic

runner-up and reigning European champion Eva Pawlik of Austria had dropped out because of a broken boot heel just before the free program. At the event, she was credited as being the first woman to land a double Lutz jump.

After winning the 1950 European Championships, she won a second world title at the 1950 World Championships. She then went on a European tour instead of returning home. She eventually moved to the United States and performed for the traveling show Ice Follies for three years under the name "Aja Zanova" before joining the Ice Capades. After her husband's death, she worked for the Ice Capades and led New York City's largest public ice rink, the Wollman Rink.

Vrzáňová was inducted into the World Figure Skating Hall of Fame in 2009. In 2009, she also received the title of the Sports Legend of the Czech Republic. In 2012, Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg presented to her the 16th annual Gratias Agit Awards in recognition of those who promote the good name of the Czech Republic abroad.

A Spotlight on our Ingrid Wendl, born 17 May 1940



Is an Austrian retired figure skater, television announcer, and political figure. She has been an Austrian People's Party delegate to the National Council of Austria since 2002.

Turković-Wendl is a two-time European champion (1956, 1958), the 1956 Olympic bronze medalist in ladies' figure skating, and one of the youngest figure skating Olympic medalists. Wendl later became a professional skater and performed in the Viennese Ice Revue (Vienna Ice Revue) and Ice Capades. She retired from the sport in 1971. In 1972 she began working for ORF, the national Austrian public service broadcaster. She retired from broadcasting in 2000. Turković-

Wendl was elected to the National Council of Austria in November 2002.

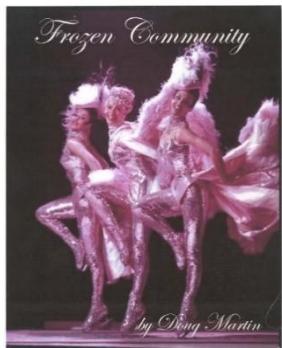


All Skater's Reunion - Photos

A few pictures from All Skater's Reunion –

May 1-3, 2023 – Las Vegas

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. Here's a cute recollection from **Otto & Maria** -

Our number wasn't going very well one particular night, and I was pretty mad at Otto, so as our number ended and the lights went out, I gave him a little hit during the blackout. The, when the lights were back on for our bow, we had to smile and look happy even though we were furious at each other. When the lights went out again I knew Otto would try to get me, so I skated off as fast as I could and ran backstage, past all the skaters and crew, with Otto running after me, and everyone wondering what was going on. I made it into the girls' dressing room before Otto could catch me, knowing there was no way he would come in after me.

Another night, Otto had a nosebleed, but, as they say, the show must go on, so he stuffed his nose with Kleenex and we went out and skated, but it was awfully distracting to look at him during the performance and see the Kleenex getting redder and redder!

One night Otto got stuck in the hotel elevator on his way to the show. We had no idea where he was. He didn't check in on time, and I thought we'd have to cancel our number, but he finally arrived, a mere fifteen minutes before we were able to skate. He managed to get into costume and was on the ice right on time.

When Otto and I joined Ice Capades, we were opening in New York City. Since we were used to a much larger ice surface as amateurs, it was difficult to fit our program within the smaller Ice Capades surface. As we were doing our number one night, we were skating backwards as fast as we could. I still wasn't used to the smaller area, and didn't realize how close I was to the curtain. Well, I caught my blade on the curtain and slid under it right into the warm-up area backstage. As quick as I could, I crawled back under the curtain and rejoined my brother on the ice.

One mishap that wasn't so funny was the time we were doing the show in Atlantic City. We began our program with lots of speed, and did a small lift, which lasted the length of the ice

surface. But Otto fell while I was in the air. I flew like a paper airplane and landed flat on my pelvis. I tried to get up to continue, but couldn't. I had to be carried off the ice with a full house watching me, which was mortifying. It turns out, my pelvis was broken, but we survived even that.

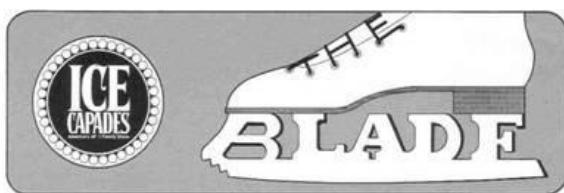
I always dreamed of being a solo skater, but Otto and I were always a pair. One night during our performance, he landed his axel but his blade broke and he couldn't continue skating. I immediately said I'd finish the number alone, thinking I'd finally have my chance to be a solo star, but oh, no, Otto took my hand and dragged me off the ice with him, so he ruined my only hope of skating a solo.

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.

ICE CAPADES REUNION RECAP



Click here for 2022 Reunion pictures



The website, 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!

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](#)

Upcoming Events



Anita & myself are down in Mexico this month promoting (2) new ice rinks - We do some exhibitions and work with the local skaters. Then off to Germany to install our company

(Glacier Ice Shows) new Show "Rock On Ice 2023" at Phantasialand Theme Park. Show opens April 1, 2023 and runs through October 31, 2023 (see attached)

Link to show trailer for show opening April 1 in Brühl, Germany at Phantasialand:

https://www.tiktok.com/@phantasialand_official/video/7113860474940247302

Link to Phantasialand - Rock On Ice

<https://www.phantasialand.de/en/theme-park/fascinating-shows/rock-on-ice/>

Frank Sweiding <fsweiding@gmail.com>



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presents

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

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