

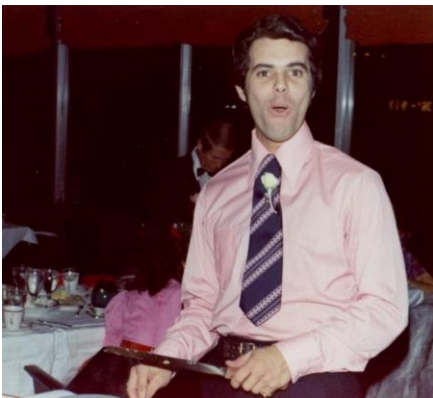
Sad News

Janet Lee – July 4, 2024



Erin Sharaf posted - I don't think anyone posted this yet, but Janet Lee passed away on July 4 after a 9 year battle with stage 4 breast cancer. Her memorial service is in a few days. If anyone has any pictures of her from her Ice Capades days (mid 80s) please send them to me and I'll pass on to her sister. She was a fiery, powerful, fun, skater, entertainer and friend and she'll be missed.

Bill Epperson – August 7, 2024



Bill passed away in Palm Springs. Unfortunately, The Blade does not have any more details or if a funeral has been scheduled. Condolences go out to Bill's family from his Ice Capades family. Rest in Peace Bill.

Lucien Boyer – August 23, 2024



Don Watson reported - Lucien Rene Boyer joined his beloved wife when he passed away peacefully today at Mountain View Hospital at 14:41pm; just over 2 months following Rika's death on June 18th. Considered one of the 'Premiere Ice Adagio' acts, Lucien & Rika enjoyed an exceptionally long career performing with Holiday on Ice, Vienna Ice Review, Ice Follies and **Ice Capades**. A more detailed Obituary honoring them both will follow along with details of upcoming Memorial plans.

Roy Blakey – Aug. 23.-2024



“Thank you Roy”

"Roy Blakey, gentle loving hero of Ice Show History, has passed. Roy's 75 year collection of Theatrical Ice Skating production memorabilia thrilled his fans and public alike. Spending time with Roy was experiencing time with a passionate advocate of preserving our history of Ice Show "fabulousness". Director and Producer (Niece) Keri Pickett brought Roy's life and passion to the public's attention with her film "The Fabulous Ice Age". Roy, our gentle warrior, lives on through his gift of his COLLECTION OF MEMORIES. RIP...ROY."



From Keri Pickett - Twenty-four hours since Roy Blakey took his last breath. Loss of a loved one feels core to the painful point of our collective suffering of the nature of impermanence. Experience teaches. My grandma, Josie Blakey gave her first born and only son lots of her genes. High cheek bones, pointed chin as well as her positive outlook. Most of all Josie's humor gene was passed along to Roy. Both of them could really crack me up and Roy almost always laughed at my jokes. Considering I went to NYC in 1982 because of him and he moved to Minnesota in 1993 in part because of me, I am humbled to have had those years of friendship. His bright light changed my life and so did his decline as it offered me a chance to show my love. Josie Blakey used to say "Keri I am happy when you say you love me but I am really happy when you show me you love me." We only get one life at a time. I like the idea of the spirit having some serious family time along the way so I hope Roy gets to see all his loved ones. Today and always I will pray for

[Manley Woman Podcast on Roy Blakey](#)

[Click Here](#)

Our Alumni in the News



Jim and Jennifer Custer - 60th Anniversary

Jennifer met Jim while she was skating with **Ice Capades** and playing at the Coliseum during Christmas. A year later, Jim joined the show and they married in 1964 in Phoenix, Ariz.

After their skating days, they continued to work together starting their business, Jim Custer Enterprises. They retired from the business in 2002 and now spend their time between their Lake Coeur d'Alene home and Palm Desert, Calif. Daughter Cheryl and husband Clint Branz now own and operate Jim Custer, Ent. Son Christopher and wife Amra live in Coeur d'Alene.

Jim and Jennifer will celebrate with family.

Reliving a Historical Production Bolero 1985



<https://youtu.be/4d9HL-X6q08?si=mxK66juaWSE7Yiov>

After watching Bolero again, our alumni recollected their experience and wanted to share their excitement that they had posted on Facebook.

Ted Shuffle's classic production of Ravel's Bolero (re-staging for Ice Capades - assisted by David Baker) - Featuring Tommy Miller, Tom Dickson, Jeff LaBrake & Priscilla Hill, Catarina Lindgren, Robin Howard, and the Skating Ensemble....Even so, tape in my video camera ran out at the finish....Shot in Philadelphia, PA., by Carl Moseley.

[Jeff LaBrake to - Gail Donaldson Lucas](#) I skated this production of Bolero in Ice Capades East & Continental Companies as the pair in East & the solo in Continental. It was originally choreographed by Ted Shuffle for Holiday on Ice but from what I remember, Ice Capades and

Holiday on Ice did a swap... the Bolero number, for the rights to use the Smurfs in HOI. David Baker came to Duluth, MN to set the Bolero number for Ice Capades and it was a huge success. The Bolero number closed the first half of the show and I lost count as to how many standing ovations it received night after night, week after week... Even in the smallest of cities on the Continental Tour it was well received with standing ovations. Starting with one skater on the ice and building up to eventually a full cast entering to different counts all in unison to the final note was brilliant. Even though the audience might not have known how difficult the back change loops were to do in synchronization, the visuals leading up to the climax of the number left them all spellbound. Tom Dickson was the first soloist to start the number in the East & West Companies and I skated it in Continental... and a bit of inside information.... *We did 56 counts of 6 of back change loops! The skaters who entered from different spots around the arena and from the curtain had to count the many counts of 6 to know when to make their entrance.*

[Don Watson](#) - "Bolero" was one of Ted Shuffle's best work if not the best. It was such a success when Ted has previous major suit was a big success when Ted previously. His choreography for "Counterpoint" has to be a code second choreography.

[DeeDee Dowding](#) - Bolero was a masterpiece of choreography and so different from any other number. I did it all three years...briefly in the line but mostly in the pairs spot. It was exhilarating and as Jeff LaBrake stated, most audiences loved the buildup and it was well received.

[Sue Packard Rodeghier](#) Yes, Shuffle originally did it in HOI. I worked with him in Europe (Hollywood Ice Revue) and I think one of his assistants set most of the step by step choreography because I don't think he had ever learned many figures. The 7th test loops and rockers are tough....not a lot of skaters would have been able to perform them.

[Simone Grigorescu-Alexander](#) I studied Jeff's Bolero videos before I joined. I was so excited when I got to skate it. The choreography was perfection.

[Simone Grigorescu-Alexander](#) - I skated the Bolero on Continental, it's last year. It was a privilege to do so and I believe the skaters, especially the soloists were happy to skate a production of its artistic and choreographic quality. Did the average Joe public understand it or appreciate it? Maybe yes maybe no... Success is not always determined by those standards. Art and entertainment should elevate the human heart and intellect, touch the human soul. Most entertainment now and then touches one from the waist down primarily. It's good and important to have the odd opportunity to view something that strives to higher ground. There have always been plenty of choreographies in shows that make you laugh, that titillate, that are great eye candy....yes, these may be more popular with the average Joe but there is always room for those numbers that strive to touch the human spirit.

[Gail Donaldson Lucas](#) - WOW! I wonder if the audiences recognized the difficulty?

[Jim Hurst](#) asked [Gail Donaldson Lucas](#) - I doubt it...one of the YouTube comments was super duper negative...viewer was not a skater. Although I think this Bolero is stunning...for non-skaters watching figures is like watching paint dry! LOL.

[Jeff LaBrake](#) Thanks very much for the inside info! Very interesting. Happy to hear the number was so well received! I am curious, did it take long to match up/sych the rhythm with the loops so that you were all together? I would think that would have been difficult. Did anyone fall doing loops, LOL...I know it rarely happens, but I've done it and I've seen skaters fall on loops while taking a figure test. Yikes!

[Jeff LaBrake](#) to [Jim Hurst](#) - Skaters falling during the loops 🤔... not that I remember, but there are two funny things that happened during the first year of the tour doing Bolero. First of all, Priscilla Hill was my original partner but tore her Achilles tendon doing a back flip with me, that wasn't the funny part. Priscilla is the youngest skater in the world to have passed her U.S.F.S.A. 8th figure, she was 9 when she received that honor. Priscilla had amazing figures, many times they would be 1 line! Although she used to get corrections from the Performance Director saying, "Priscilla, we don't need to you to trace the loops, one on top of the other, we just need you to stay on the music!" 🤔 *The counts in the music for the loops was to push off on 1, pull through the change of edge on 3 then into the 3rd circle on 4,5,6, and into the loop on 1,2 and pull out of the loop on 3 and back to your center on 4,5,6, and then repeat to finish one full pattern.* The second funny thing I remember was we were at the Capital Center in D.C. doing the loops at the beginning of the number and it was always so quiet with just the music still in the soft stage. Someone at the top of the mezzanine level on stage left either dropped a basketball or deliberately tossed one and it bounced all the way down the stairs of the arena with an endless thump, thump, thump... and bounced over the side dasher boards and rolled across all of our loops and hit the dash on the ice on the stage right side. Luckily it didn't interfere with anyone's loops, but we all had a very hard time trying to keep a straight face! We didn't even want to look at each other for fear of bursting out laughing.

[Jim Hurst](#) - Hi [Jeff LaBrake](#), thanks for the stories!! Wow, gold medalist at 9!! I never knew that about her. I thought you were going to say she got stuck in her tracing/rut, lol. Love the basketball story! We had audience members walk onto the ice now and then during a number. That was weird to come face to face with some guy on the ice! The only bouncing ball we had washere it comes.....Freddie Trenkler!! Loved Freddie!!

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

**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
(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

Attendee's list as of May 22, 2024

[Click here](#)

'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!

Did you know?



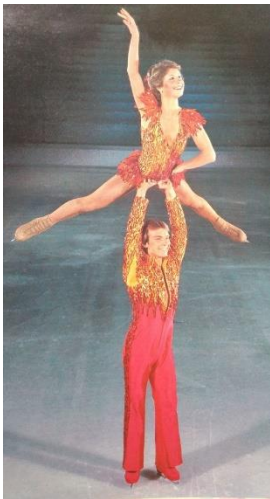
[Click here](#)

The Disney secret history you didn't know existed. Feld Entertainment produces Disney on Ice, which has been bringing Mickey Mouse & the magic of Disney animation to cities around the world for over 40 years. Disney on Ice is currently touring Mickey's Search Party & Mickey & Friends! Disney has always been a big part of pop culture but how did this Disney on Ice phenomenon come to be? Well, Disney characters in ice shows go back over 75 years beginning in the 1940s with the Ice Follies & Ice Capades, and they even appeared at Disneyland on opening day. But it wasn't always a success. When they tried their own arena show called Disney on Parade, it was a disaster. So come and explore Disney's Ice Age- A Frozen History to the success of Disney on Ice!

Reliving Fond Memories from the Wardrobe Department

Jerry Lee Kidd shares some 'on the road' secrets from the Wardrobe department

Frank Sweiding and Gayle Hamula



Not sure but thinking the Cap Center with the jumbotron TV. Frank Sweiding and Gayle Hamula were in Latin Fire, Frank of course had a one-piece jumpsuit made out of heavy lycra, well over time the costume had stretched and gotten baggy, so I say to Frank, how about I take it apart in the crotch and take it up and in some. He was in agreement. So, I am pretty sure it was a three show Saturday, between 2nd and 3rd, I took his costume and released all four seams in the crotch, no problem. My first mistake was not measuring the length of the girth. So, I put it back together with not much time to spare before he has to wear it again. Well, the first time I saw it on him was on the jumbotron and I almost choked. He had this enormous crotch bulge. I had taken it up and in too much. Within minutes every boy in the chorus was in Wardrobe wanting me to give them a bulge like Frank's. Needless to say, I redid it and it looked fine for the rest of the tour.

Another on the road story from Jerry. This dress almost got me into big trouble with Armin in the studio. Carol's dress had begun to look flat and you could tell it was damp, the feathers absorbed moisture and held onto it. So, in a city that had washer and dryer, I took the dress and put it into the dryer on low heat to dry it out. Well Carol saw this and automatically thought I had machine washed her dress, so she called the studio to tell them what I had done, in no time Armin was on the phone calling me. Once I had explained all was good. Oh yeah, and the dress came out looking like new..



If memory serves me correctly, Kitty and Peter were making quest appearances between the companies, as I would have never had the time to do what I am about to tell you all. They both came to me before they were leaving and asked if there was anyway to lengthen their costumes in the girth (body). Well to anyone who sews, this is about impossible to do, but I told them I would do what I could. Thought about this for a while and came up with this solution. Go to Jules, borrow a couple of stage weights and some rope. I ran the rope through the leg holes up through the crotch and out the other leg. Tied on the stage weights and using a spray bottle wet down both costumes through the body and let gravity take over. After several days removed the weights and waited for the outcome. Both were so pleased and could not thank me enough. Never told them how I accomplished the feat. Now to be totally honest with all of you, especially the girls. When you would ask me to take in your costume because you had lost weight or some other reason, I would always say "just hang it up", then, when I had the time, I would either change the crotch pad or arm shields and call it a day. When you came back to get and wore it, you were always so grateful for me taking it in. Now you know the awful truth, it was never touched. Sorry guys.

Jerry Lee Kidd also recollects –

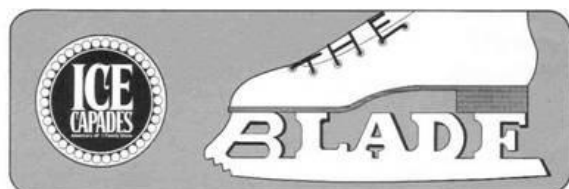


Seeing the old Lafayette and Croydon made me remember something from those old days. A Jerry on the road story. In one of those hotels when it came time to leave and I was packing, my carry on was on the shelf in the closet, the buckle on the strap had become wedged between the wall and the shelf (space big enough to get my fingers in) and upon trying to release my buckle, I felt something else up there, when I finally got the buckle loose and the mystery item/items this is what was wedged up there. I have no idea how long it had been there before I found it and often wonder what the story was that went along with the head and leg.

Pictures from Past Reunions

All Skater's Reunion – May 1-3, 2023 Las Vegas

Ice Capades 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!

Upcoming Events

2024 The Experience Adult Skate Camp

Palm Springs

the experience!

adult skate camp

Palm Springs 2024
 SEPTEMBER 17 - SEPTEMBER 20
 Berger Foundation Iceplex

ON AND OFF-ICE SESSIONS

Daily off-ice warm up classes in studio

On-ice classes include:

- Randy's Three's Company
- Liz's Jumps, Spins, and Storytelling on Ice
- Jeremy's Movement with Music
- Elin's IceFlow

Small on-ice groups focusing on:

- Turns & Steps
- Jumps
- Choreographic Movement
- Spins

Private lessons available separately on request

THE EXPERIENCE IS WHAT MAKES THE JOURNEY REMEMBERED

Enjoy quality time with our coaches and fellow campers at:

- Champagne Welcome
- Catered Lunch & Learns
- Beautiful Dinner and unique Palm Springs outing

\$1950

For more details and registration

<https://www.theexperienceadultskatecamp.com>

SCAN ME

[Click here for more information](https://www.theexperienceadultskatecamp.com)



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