



SUMMER

NEWSLETTER

PART II

2014 WAS LEGEND

SINAISKY NUNEZ - PROFESSIONAL ACROBATICS

Sinaisky Nunez (Professional Acrobatics) is a native of Cuba. He has worked with the Festival of the Lion King show at Animal Kingdom in Disney World since the day that the park opened 14 years ago. He is a 'Little Monkey' who performs gymnastics moves on the rings, bar, and trampoline along with three other monkeys. The act culminates with a bounce from a trampoline to a single arm catch to a trapeze mounted 30 feet above the floor. Four monkeys perform a monkey chain climb to the top of the trapeze. Sinaisky won the 1991 Junior Pan American Games in Tallahassee and was training to make the Cuban Olympic team prior to defecting to the US. Once he arrived in the US, Sinaisky enrolled at Miami Dade College. Competing for three seasons, Sinaisky acquired a record 14 All-America certificates at MDC. He won the USA Gymnastics Collegiate Championships in 1996 at Seattle Pacific University and placed on several events including floor exercise, pommel horse, rings, vaulting, and parallel bars. Nunez is currently getting ready to continue the newly choreographed Festival of the Lion King show. The old theatre site has given way to the Avatar and a new facility is being completed for the new show in Africa of the Animal Kingdom.



2014 WAS LEGEND RON MERRIOTT - DIVING

Ron Merriott (Diving) has excelled in several of the WAS acrobatic disciplines. Ron was the 1984 Olympic bronze medalist on the 3-Meter Springboard, an NCAA All-American 1979-82, the 1982 NCAA 3-Meter Springboard Champion, a three-time National Diving Champion, and a member of the US National Diving Team 1981-1984. Merriott was also the 1976 World Champion on the double mini-trampoline and the bronze medalist on the trampoline. Ron was the National Trampoline Champion in 1977 and two-times World Age Group Trampoline Champion. Over his career Merriott received expert coaching from Bob Bollinger, Donald Waters, and Dick Kimball. Ron coached age group, high school, and summer club in the state of Illinois for 18 years. Merriott is a US diving judge and he has been employed with FedEx Express for 25 years.



2014 WAS LEGEND JAN BUCHER - EXTREME SPORTS

Jan Bucher Carmichael (Extreme Sports) won two gold medals in 1986 and in 1989, and one silver medal in 1991 in the World Freestyle Championships in ski ballet. She also won a silver medal in ski ballet at the 1988 Olympic Games when ballet was a demonstration event. Converting from the sport of ice-skating to skiing, Jan went on to amass 57 World Cup victories including seven ballet Championships and three US National Ballet Championships. Jan retired from competitive freestyle skiing in 1991 and accepted a coaching position with the Canadian national team for several seasons. She also ran an excellent summer ski camp at Mount Hood, Oregon. She was elected to the US National Ski Hall of Fame in 1993.



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MIKE JACKI - LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Mike Jacki (Lifetime Achievement) served as the President of USA Gymnastics from 1983 to 1994. He took over an organization that was on the verge of financial ruin and left it as one of the strongest sports governing body in the USOC. He promoted national club growth, athlete support, early recognition of talent, and financial and training support. The International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG) also adopted many of Jacki's ideas. Since Mike took over leadership, the USAG has won medals in many of the international gymnastics competition the US entered. Mike implemented the inclusion of international coaches in the US developmental program, a decision that elevated the quality of the US coaching community. Mike then served as the CEO and President of the US Skiing Association (USSA) from 1994-1996. Under Jacki's leadership year-round training became the nucleus of the developmental program that made the US a major player in the international skiing arena. Mike started the Snowboard program in 1994 that resulted in Snowboarding entering the Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan, in 1998. Snowboarding represents 40 percent of the ski business conducted worldwide. The USSA has continued to win numerous medals since Mike's tenure. Most recently, Mike was the Director of New Business Development of Woodward Camp. Under his leadership, Woodward became an international leader in the Action Sport market.



2014 WAS LEGEND BRANDY JOHNSON - ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

Brandy Johnson-Scharpf (Artistic Gymnastics) was a 1988 US Olympian. Brandy placed 10th in the all-around in Seoul, Korea, and was 5th in the vault event. In 1989, Brandy won the US National All-around Championship including three individual events and was a member of the 4th place US World Championship team to Stuttgart, Germany. She placed 7th in the all-around and received the silver medal in vaulting. In 1990, Johnson placed third all-around in the US National Championships while winning the floor exercise and vault titles.

She won the 1990 Olympic Festival All-around and placed 5th in the All-around in the World Cup making three event finals. After retirement in 1990, Johnson worked as a stunt double in Hollywood including an adaptation of the British comedy *Bean*. Brandy is the owner of Brandy Johnson's Global Gymnastics in Clermont, Florida.



**2014 WAS LEGEND
LANE SPINA - EXTREME SPORTS**



Lane Spina (Extreme Sports) is a 1988 Olympic silver medalist and a 1992 Olympic bronze medalist in freestyle skiing. Lane is four time World Champion medalist. He was the 1986 FIS World Championships silver medalist. He repeated the feat in 1989. In 1991 Lane became the FIS World Championships gold medalist. In 1993 Spina won a bronze medal is the FIS World Championships. Spina amassed 14 World Cup victories among his 49 World Cup podiums and was a five-time US National Champion. He then qualified for the US Ski Team and Olympic Scholarship program and went on to obtain a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and an MBA from the University of Nevada Las Vegas. He is currently managing products for the emerging global gaming markets.

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LA NORMA - PROFESSIONAL ACROBATICS

Norma Fox (Professional Acrobatics) was Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus's center ring act in the late forties through 1952 when Norma doubled for Betty Hutton in the 1952 Oscar winning movie "The Greatest Show on Earth." La Norma, as she is called, has been favorably compared to the great Lillian Leitzel. Norma is an expert on the single trapeze. Norma made her own wardrobe featuring colorful feathers and sequins. She became fluent in several languages due to her international travels. She perfected the bare heel catch, the ankle catch and the knee catch working without a net at heights of 30 to 70 feet from the floor. The native of Denmark was married to Andre Fox, the trainer of a 12 horses act until his death. Andre designed Norma's act that featured a rocket and a satellite orbiting the earth 70 feet above the ground with Norma working trapeze under the satellite. Today, Norma mentors and coaches circus students in Sarasota County who are enrolled in the Sailor Circus program at the Arena at Sarasota High School.



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SASHA DANILCHENKO - TRAMPOLINE

Alexandre “Sasha” Danilchenko (Trampoline & Tumbling) was a member of the Russian National Trampoline Team from 1987 until 1997. He is one of the most decorated athletes in the history of his sport and was granted the title “Honored Master of Sport” in 1996. In 1990 Sasha helped Russia win the gold team medal by winning a silver medal on Synchronized Trampoline in the World Championships. In the 1991 European Championships, Russia again won the gold team medal while Danilchenko won a silver medal on Trampoline. In 1992, Russia won the gold team medal while Sasha won the gold medal on Synchronized Trampoline. Russia earned the bronze team medal in the 1994 World Championships and Danilchenko contributed a gold medal victory on Synchronized Trampoline. Sasha won a gold medal on Synchronized Trampoline and a silver medal on Trampoline in the 1994 World Cup. He bested his 1994 World Cup performance by winning gold on Trampoline and Synchronized Trampoline in 1996.

As an original cast member for Cirque du Soleil La Nouba beginning in 1998 now in its fifteenth year in Downtown Disney, Danilchenko is considered an iron man performing for fifteen years (7000 consecutive shows) before missing a performance because Sasha needed to return to his home in Russia and visit his father who was extremely ill.



2014 WAS LEGEND MICHELE MITCHELL - DIVING

Michele Mitchell (Diving) is a two-time Olympic Games silver medalist on the 10-meter platform. She earned her first medal in 1984 in Los Angeles and her second in 1988 in Seoul, South Korea. She was the 1987 Pan American Games Champion. During her collegiate career 1979-1983, Michele was a four-time NCAA All-American and nine-time US National Champion. Mitchell was also the 1985 World FINA Cup Champion and a finalist for the 1988 Sullivan Award. Mitchell holds the American Record for platform diving scoring 479.40 points for an eight-dive list. Dr. Mitchell has earned three degrees at her alma mater, the University of Arizona. She is in her third year as the Director of Operations for the U of A for the swimming and diving program. She had served as diving coach for 15 years. Her divers accumulated 27 All-American honors, 11 PAC-10 titles, and numerous CoSIDA Academic All-American honors. In 2008, the Wildcat divers won both the men and women's NCAA Championship titles. Michele has worked as an expert commentator covering the 1992 Olympic Trials and Olympic Games, the 1993 World University Games, the 1994 and the 1995 NCAA Women's Championships, and anchored the in-stadium radio broadcasts for diving in the 1996 Olympic Games.



THE WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY A PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

Please join the WAS in Disney World for the 2014 WAS Congress. There is something for everyone. Enjoy the inaugural presentation of the Golden Achievement Award and the induction of 13 Legends from 7 acrobatic disciplines during the Monday evening banquet in the spectacular 'Topper Room' on the 19th floor of the Best Western LBV Hotel. You and your teammates are invited to get together at the new 'team reunion reception' event on Sunday evening. Plan to participate in the informative and entertaining WAS Program sessions on Monday afternoon. You are personally invited to attend the cast rehearsal of the Cirque du Soleil La Nouba show on Tuesday afternoon. Come to Florida early or stay later and enjoy everything that Disney World has to offer while staying at the beautiful Best Western LBV at an attractive room rate. Help make the 2014 WAS Congress in Florida for the first time in a decade be a huge success.

Sincerely,
Bruce Davis
WAS PRESIDENT

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2014 WAS Congress registration forms
are available at www.worldacro.co