



World Acrobatics Society Summer Newsletter 2008

President **John Deining** called a meeting of the World Acrobatics Society (WAS) Board of Directors for Sunday May 11th 2008 from 8AM-12 noon at the International Swimming Hall of Fame facility on Ft. Lauderdale Beach. The following Board of Directors forming a quorum was in attendance: **John Deining, Duncan Erley, Pamela Pond, Don Leas, Frank Gorman, Eldon Godfrey, and Bruce Davis.**



WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING –INTERNATIONAL SWIMMING HALL OF FAME MAY 11TH 2008 (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: GUTTING, GORMAN, LEAS, POND, DENINGER & ERLEY.)

WAS Congress September 16th -18th 2008 Hampton Inn Tropicana

Duncan Erley, WAS Secretary, has ably sent out minutes from this meeting. Plans were made for the WAS Congress to be held in Las Vegas September 16-18th 2008. The tentative schedule is **Tuesday afternoon**: Board of Directors Meeting. **Wednesday morning & afternoon**: four one-hour presentations by: **George Hery, Vitaly Scherbo & Nancy Thurston**. One other speaker is to be announced. **Wednesday evening**: Induction of ten outstanding individuals into the WAS Gallery of Legends: **Jim Bertz**-tumbling, **Helen Crlenkovich**-diving, **Vincent D'Autorio**-artistic gymnastics, **Emmanuel Durand**-trampoline, **Lisa Hoyle**-professional acrobatics, **Jack Lalanne**-contributor, **Kelly McCormick**-diving, **Dmitri Poliaroush**-trampoline, **Vitaly Scherbo**-artistic gymnastics, & **Bernard Wrightson**-diving. The event will be efficiently emceed by WAS Board Director **Dick Abershardt**. The "legends" will receive plaques and display new three- inch medallions contributed by Director **Bruno Klaus**. The general membership meeting will be held **Thursday morning** until adjournment. The **2008 Fall WAS Newsletter** will publish a final and complete WAS Congress schedule. Please plan to attend this outstanding event.

The WAS Congress and all activities will take place at the **Hampton Inn Tropicana**. Pre registration is \$80.00 and on site registration is \$90.00. Twenty rooms have been reserved at a rate of \$95.00 plus taxes. Please call (877) 584-6835 to make your reservation.

Some of the **topics** to be considered at the WAS Congress include: whether to call inductees "**honorees**" or "**legends**;" the creation of a "**Lifetime Achievement Award**;" changing the night on which the **Banquet** takes place; establishing a **fixed length standard for biographies** on the website and **discussing difficulties** when all five WAS officers are elected in the same year.

The current Board of Directors has **eighteen members** elected to staggered three- year terms. The following Directors have terms ending in 2008: **Dick Albershardt, A. Bruce Frederick, Dick Gutting, Leigh Hennessey, Bruno Klaus and Pamela Pond**. The following WAS terms that end in 2009 include: **John Deininger (President), Bill Marcus (First Vice President), Mason Kauffman (Second Vice President), George Hery (Treasurer), Duncan Erley (Secretary), and Don Leas**. The following WAS terms that end in 2010 are: **Scott Barklay, Paula Boelsems, Bruce Davis, Frank Gorman, Loren Janes, and Joe Schabacker**.

Buck Dawson Dies in April 2008

Buck Dawson the longtime promoter and curator of the **International Swimming Hall of Fame** died in April of 2008. The WAS Board of Directors stopped their meeting long enough to attend a video presentation on the life of Buck Dawson. Buck was the driving force behind the International Swimming Hall of Fame facility and museum. **Glen Sundby** visited Buck when he decided to create an International **Gymnastics Hall of Fame** in Orange County, California. Here is the trivia question. Did Buck wear his patch over his left or right eye?

Persons of Note: Dick Gutting Chairman of the WAS Legends Nomination Committee

He was a freshman high school dropout from Chicago who liked to tumble. He was disappointed when during his visit to the University of Illinois when **Charlie Pond** said, "There is no place for you here at Illinois." Then **Bill Roetzheim** suggested that he accompany him to Florida State University, and that **Hartley Price** would get him into college. He talked the FSU admissions director into allowing him to enter FSU by majoring in music. Gutting said, "If I can pass college courses at FSU what does it matter if I don't have a high school diploma. Just give me a chance to prove it."

For his freshman year music recital he decided on his own to that instead of performing a **Franz Joseph Haydn** classical piece on his trusty trumpet; he would perform "*Just After Midnight*" by **Theolonius Monk** in Haydn-ish style! After all wasn't he the one who had brought the **Dizzy Gillespie's** be-bop sound from Chicago to Tallahassee? Everyone in the audience loved his rendition of "*Just After Midnight*" except the music department chairman who was not impressed with his presentation. He changed his major to physical education the next day! His trumpet was good enough to earn him money with his twelve-piece **Dixieland band** that played the local military, fraternity and sorority dances. He needed the money because he did not have an athletic scholarship to rely on. He also tried blowing on the trumpet while he was bouncing up and down on the trampoline. On one occasion he was asked to be the guest conductor at the **State Symphony Orchestra of Florida**. He conducted the *William Tell Overture* at a high jinx concert. Acting as a "**confused conductor**," he fell into the orchestra pit falling onto a trampoline that he had previously hidden in the pit. He came up with a bounce and continued to execute a perfectly timed "**hi ho silver routine**" to the "**Lone Ranger**" music!

He had ideas for tumbling and trampoline that some would have considered extreme. He was surrounded by all the outstanding gymnasts at FSU. He admired the great form of gymnasts wearing their long apparatus pants. He had **Jane**, the facilities director at **Katherine Montgomery Gymnasium** and a part time seamstress, make him a **pair of bell-bottom competition pants that were half garnet in the back and gold in the front**. He was the first trampolinist to wear **long pants** in competition. The bell-bottoms enabled him to grab his shins when he executed his **double back, double back sequence** which was unequalled at the time. The colored pants swirled when he twisted. What about the ninety second time limit in trampoline? He ignored that and performed an impeccable **twenty-five second routine executing his most difficult tricks in sequence**. The next year following his **1952 twin championships in the NCAA and NAAU**, the rules committee changed the competition rules to a ten bounce routine instead of a ninety second time limit. Had his championship trampoline performance influenced the rule change?

He approached **Tom Nugent**, FSU's second football coach with the idea of leading the football team out of the tunnel dressed as a Seminole mascot and turning a long row of back handsprings. He thought he might get some free dinners at the football training table in exchange for his services. Little did he know that **he would create a tradition** and be followed by a series of FSU gymnastic team members who would tumble for the football team and be called "**Sammie Seminole**." Jane the

Seamstress again provided the costumes. She fashioned a belt with a gold flap in the front and a garnet flap in the back that a **tumbler** could slip on over his shorts and to look like an Indian. Nugent loved having gymnasts tumble, build pyramids and bounce trampoline for the FSU football games.

Dick took teaching positions in Miami Dade County and turned his efforts into professionally performing on the trampoline and diving into pools. He teamed with twenty-year partner **Whitey Hart** for the "**Dick Gooding & Whitey Hart**" trampoline act. He teamed with **Joe Greene and Barbara Bailey** in "**Two Flips & a Flop.**" He could often be found on Miami Beach bouncing tandem with partner **Jim Jackson**. Television appearances included: **The Steve Allen Show, Jan Murray's Treasure Hunt, The Dave Garroway Show and Jack Palance's Greatest Show on Earth**. Some of the professional water shows in which he performed were: "**Aqua Wonderland**", Bob Maxwell's "**Aquarama**", Sam Snyder's "**International Water Follies**", Henry Vee's "**Aqua Frolics**".

In the late nineties, he retired from his career as a history and humanities teacher from **North Miami Beach Senior High School**. He was so good in teaching **humanities** that the Miami Dade Board of Instruction wanted him to package his course and take it to the other county high schools. Do you think they knew he was a high school dropout?



DICK GUTTING TRYING TO IMPRESS FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COEDS IN 1953



Jackie Fie and Muriel Grossfeld, WAS legends, were in Philadelphia for the 2008 Olympic Gymnastics Trials along with (L to R): **Sandy Theilz, Linda Chezinski, Sue Ammerman, JoAnn Pasquale, Jackie, Muriel, Greta Treiber and Nellie Kim!**

Florida State University won five national gymnastics championships in the early fifties. **Dr. Hartley Price** and **Bill Roetzheim**, WAS legends, and **Dick Gutting**, WAS Director, were instrumental in FSU's success. FSU gymnasts have continued to meet for annual reunions. On Friday May 16th **eight FSU eighty year olds** met for dinner in Miami. Only **Raphael Lecona** was absent. Youngster, 79 year old **Chick Cicio**, was allowed to take Raphael's place! (L to R) **Bill, Joe Regna, Dick, Hartley (deceased), Pat Signorelli, Don Holder, Raphael Lecuona, Carmine Regna, & Jack Miles.**

EIGHT, 80 in '08

DICK GUTTING	5-28-28
DON HOLDER	9-29-28
JIM JACKSON	10-14-28
RAPHAEL LECUNA	6-2-28
JACK MILES	12-28-28
CARMINE REGNA	8-1-28
JOE REGNA	5-1-28
BILL ROETZHEIM	8-7-28
PAT SIGNORELLI	5-19-27
COPS!	

Eightieth Birthday Party, May 16, 2008

Cheers, Hartley!

Trivia question answer from page2: Buck was known to wear the patch over either eye!

