

WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

Société Acrobatiques du Monde

THE

ACROBAT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

NO. 1# APRIL ISSUE, 1996



The group that recently met in Las Vegas to officially form the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY were: (Back Row) CHARLIE POND, HOBIE BILLINGSLEY, DICK ALBERSHARDT, BIL COPP. (Middle Row) BOB BOLLINGER, EDESEL BUCHANNAN, PAULA BOELSEMS, HAL SHAW. (Front Row) DAN HOFF, DICK SMITH, CHERYL HOFF, NELLIE FILLIGER, JOE SCHABACKER and HAL FREY. Other participants included: GEORGE NISSEN, GLENN SUNDBY, FRANK BARE SR. ROB & NATHALIE BOLLINGER, CHRISTOPHER SUSZEK and BOGDAN JAYSEK who were unavailable when this late afternoon picture was taken.



PAULA BOELSEMS

2nd Vice President

The first Organizational Forum of the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY was held at the Melrose Suites Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada on March 11, 12, 13 of this year. Twenty-five of the nations most eminent individuals in Gymnastics, Diving, Sports Acrobatics, Trampoline & Tumbling, Free-Style Skiing and Professional Acrobatics participated in this venture. This organization, called W.A.S. was officially formed, a Board of Directors and an Executive Director were elected, plans for the future were formulated and a basic "Mission Statement" evolved. The mission statement is as follows:

WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

Société Acrobatiques Du Monde

"A WORLD-WIDE FORUM TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION, EDUCATION AND FRIENDSHIP AMONG ALL INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE PRESERVATION OF ACROBATIC HISTORY PLUS THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE VARIOUS ACROBATIC DISCIPLINES."

A LETTER FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends in the wonderful wide world of "acrobatics":

It was with a deep sense of pleasure and commitment that I recently accepted the position of "Executive Director" for the newly formed WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY. To me, as well as to many others, the establishment of this organization is the realization of a life-long dream. Certainly, such an organization, whose mission it is to provide education, preserve history, lend support and foster brotherhood and friendship among the world's various acrobatic communities is both a noble effort and is long overdue.

In this, our first month of operation, it is gratifying to learn that some of the most eminent names in acrobatics have already joined our organization, either as Life-Time Charter or Charter members. Names like George Nissen, Glenn Sundby, Charlie Pond, Hobie Billingsley, Dick Kimball, Dick Smith, Don Leas, Joe Schabacker, Irv Bedard, Frank Bare Sr., Paula Boelsems, Newt Loken, George Szypula, Frank LaDue, Steve Elliott, Dan Millman, Edsel Buchanan, Jeff Austin, Dan and Cheryl Hoff, Russ Saunders, Bill Harris, Nellie Filliger, Dr. Bruce Fredrick, Dr. Roger Council, Ron Munn, Bil Copp, Hal Frey, Karen Price Castle and a host of others comprise a list that can only be decribed with one word.... "Pioneers!"

This is our FIRST quarterly Newsletter. It is far from perfect (and perhaps, a bit too lengthy), but hopefully, it will tell you what our organization is all about. We are eager to hear news from you and we will always be receptive to any ideas or suggestions from you that can help this organization develop and grow. Wishing you the "very best" in whatever acrobatic endeavor you presently pursue, I am,

Yours in Acrobatics!

Bob Bollinger
Bob Bollinger
Executive Director

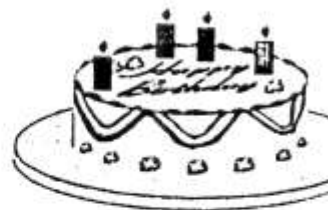


BOB BOLLINGER
Executive Director



IT ALL BEGAN AT A PARTY!

A BRIEF HISTORY of THE WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY



On February 3, 1994, a surprise 80th birthday party was held at the Treasure Island Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada for George Nissen. Nissen is recognized the world over as one of the original pioneers in the sport of trampolining and one of the world's leading manufacturers of quality gymnastics equipment. No less than 115 guests appeared to help George celebrate his birthday and the guest list included some of the world's best known figures in all areas of acrobatics.

After the celebration, Bob Bollinger, the Master of Ceremonies for the occasion, received a considerable amount of input concerning the possible formation of some type of social organization that would bring people of similar interests in acrobatics together on a regular basis. For over two years, Bollinger and others, continued to receive positive input concerning this idea.

In October of 1995, Bollinger called a meeting at the home of his son, Rob Bollinger in Las Vegas, Nevada. Attending that meeting were Dr. Joseph Schabacker (Life-Time Honorary President of the United States Sports Acrobatics Federation) and one of its founders, Charlie Pond, world renowned tumbling, free-style skiing and gymnastics coach, Glenn Sundby, past editor of many gymnastics and acrobatic magazines, Dr. Glenn Wilson, former National Trampoline Champion, Don (Otto) Zazadaney, professional acrobat and Rob Bollinger, Professional Acrobatic performer with the "Cirque du Soleil".

At this meeting, plans for an Organizational Forum for the establishment of a World Acrobatics Organization were developed and it was decided to hold such a Forum in Las Vegas on March 11, 12 and 13th of 1996. Over 100 invitations were sent out and over 75% responded positively to the establishment of such an organization. Many of these positive respondents were unable to attend the March Forum but they assured us of their support. A total of 25 people (from six of the seven acrobatic disciplines), attended the Forum and officially established the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY.

Those in attendance were: Dr. Joe Schabacker, Dr. Harold Frey, Charlie Pond, Paula Boelsems, Edsel Buchannan, Dr. Bruce Fredrick, Nellie Filliger, Dan and Cheryl Hoff, Dick Albershardt, Glenn Sundby, George Nissen, Bil Copp, Frank Bare Sr., Mrs. Bare, Hobie Billingsley, Dick Smith, Hal Shaw, Norma Fredrick, Christopher Suszek, Nathalie Bollinger, Rob Bollinger and Bob Bollinger.

A BRIEF HISTORY

(Continued)

The meeting in Las Vegas was held in true forum style and "Robert's Rules of Order" were employed in the mission adaptives and election of Board Members that followed the opening discussions, The following people were duly elected to the following offices:

WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

BOARD of DIRECTORS

HOBIE BILLINGSLEY - PRESIDENT

CHARLIE POND - VICE PRESIDENT

PAULA BOELSEMS - VICE PRESIDENT

DICK SMITH - TREASURER

DR. BRUCE FREDRICK - SECRETARY ARCHIVIST

NELLIE FILLIGER - SOCIAL CHAIRPERSON

CHERYL HOFF - SOCIAL CHAIRPERSON

BIL COPP- EDUCATIONAL CHAIRMAN

DR. JOSEPH SCHABACKER - SENIOR ADVISOR

GEORGE P. NISSEN - BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE

DR. HAROLD FREY - BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE

GLENN SUNDBY - BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE

EDSEL BUCHANNAN - BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE

ROB BOLLINGER - BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE

ROBERT F. BOLLINGER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WE ARE NOW ONLY ONE MONTH OLD AND ALREADY, WE HAVE 50 PAID MEMBERS IN THIS ORGANIZATION! WORD SPREADS FAST AND NEW MEMBERSHIPS ARE COMING IN EVERY DAY! WE WILL BE HOLDING OUR FIRST W.A.S. INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS at BIL COPP'S "FLORIDA WORKOUT" in NAPLES, FLORIDA BETWEEN DEC 26th and DEC 30th of THIS YEAR! OVER 15 FOREIGN COUNTRIES ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND. ASSUREDLY, OUR GOAL OF 200 MEMBERS BY THAT TIME WILL BE REALIZED!

HOBIE BILLINGSLEY

OUR FIRST PRESIDENT!

Hobie Billingsley headed the diving program at Indiana University for 30 years. A national champion at Ohio State in his youth, he coached in four Olympics. Today he holds camps for coaches, gives clinics in this country and overseas, and raises funds for the sport he loves.



HOBIE with Mark Lenzi, gold medal winner in the 1992 Olympics and one of Hobie's star pupils.
(Photo by Carl Cox)

The First Organizational Forum for the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY was both fortunate and wise in electing HOBIE BILLINGSLEY from Bloomington, Indiana as the first President of the W.A.S. Board of Directors. Hobie certainly needs no introduction to the world community of competitive diving and very little, if any introduction to the world of Trampoline and Tumbling. He is a legend in his own time with over 55 years of diving and trampoline experience.

Hobie views the formation of the WORLD ACROBATICS COMMUNITY as a milestone in developing friendly communication, education, historical preservation and social contact between the seven recognized areas of acrobatic endeavor. With the help and encouragement of the W.A.S. Board of Directors and its many new members, he has pledged his time and commitment to seeing that this organization starts off in the proper direction and stays on course to fulfill its basic mission.

We, the members of the WORLD ACROBATIC SOCIETY wish Hobie every bit of success in this noble endeavor and pledge to him our continued support.

THE MEMBERS OF THE
WORLD ACROBATIC SOCIETY

OUR MEMBERSHIP POLICY

INDIVIDUAL W.A.S. Memberships only will be accepted by the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY. Because we are a non-profit, non-political organization (soon to become a corporation), we do not accept memberships from individual organizations. Our reason for this is that we, in no way, wish to interfere with, or interrupt the political process of any recognized organization. We feel that each organization is entitled to its own autonomy and W.A.S. does, in no way, ever wish to threaten that autonomy.

As a group of individuals, interested only in preserving the history of acrobatics world-wide and in assisting in any way we can, the continuence, growth and development of all acrobatic activities, we feel that we must adopt this membership policy.

We do, however appreciate, applaud and support any and all Acrobatic Organizational Governing Bodies or established Acrobatic Organizations, both on the State, Provincial, Regional, National and International levels that seek to further the interests of individual participants in the various acrobatic disciplines.

*The Board of Directors of
THE WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY*

**INFORMATION ON HOW TO APPLY
FOR INDIVIDUAL LIFE-TIME CHARTER AND
CHARTER MEMBERSHIPS IS PROVIDED
ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.**



World Acrobatics Society



THERE ARE MANY REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THIS ORGANIZATION!

If you are a person that has a past or present affiliation or a present interest in any form of "ACROBATICS", this new organization is meant to order for you! At the present time, funding for our non-profit organization comes strictly from membership fees. Hopefully, in the future, additional funding will come from selling advertizements, donations and corporate sponsorship. In this, our CHARTER YEAR, find out why YOU should become a member! For 1996 only, two types of membership are offered. Both are described as follows:

LIFE-TIME CHARTER MEMBERSHIP

\$100.00

- 1. FOUR informative NEWSLETTERS per year. All with pictures and latest updates on seven categories of Acrobatics!***
- 2. TWO beautiful 8-1/2 x 11 colored MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATES on Gold Astro-Parch Index Stock for both home and office. One of your certificates is laminated!***
- 3. TEN laminated colored business cards (custom made for you) with WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY logo.***
- 4. ONE free 8 square inch advertizement or notice for your club or you personally, each year in one of our four newsletters. A good way to advertize your club, sell a product or service!***
- 5. Complete access to our Historical & Educational libraries which is becoming one of the most complete and comprehensive Sports Libraries in the world!***
- 6. FREE admission to all scheduled W.A.S. meetings and social events.***
- 7. Easy access to professional job placement for those seeking employment in circuses, diving shows and etc. (Primarily geared for those with marketable acrobatic skills).***
- 8. NO yearly renewal fees!***
- 9. FREE W.A.S. Directory with laminated cover and spiral mound. Will be available by July of 1996.***
- 10. An excellent opportunity for you to renew old friendships and acquire new friends with interests similar to yours!***

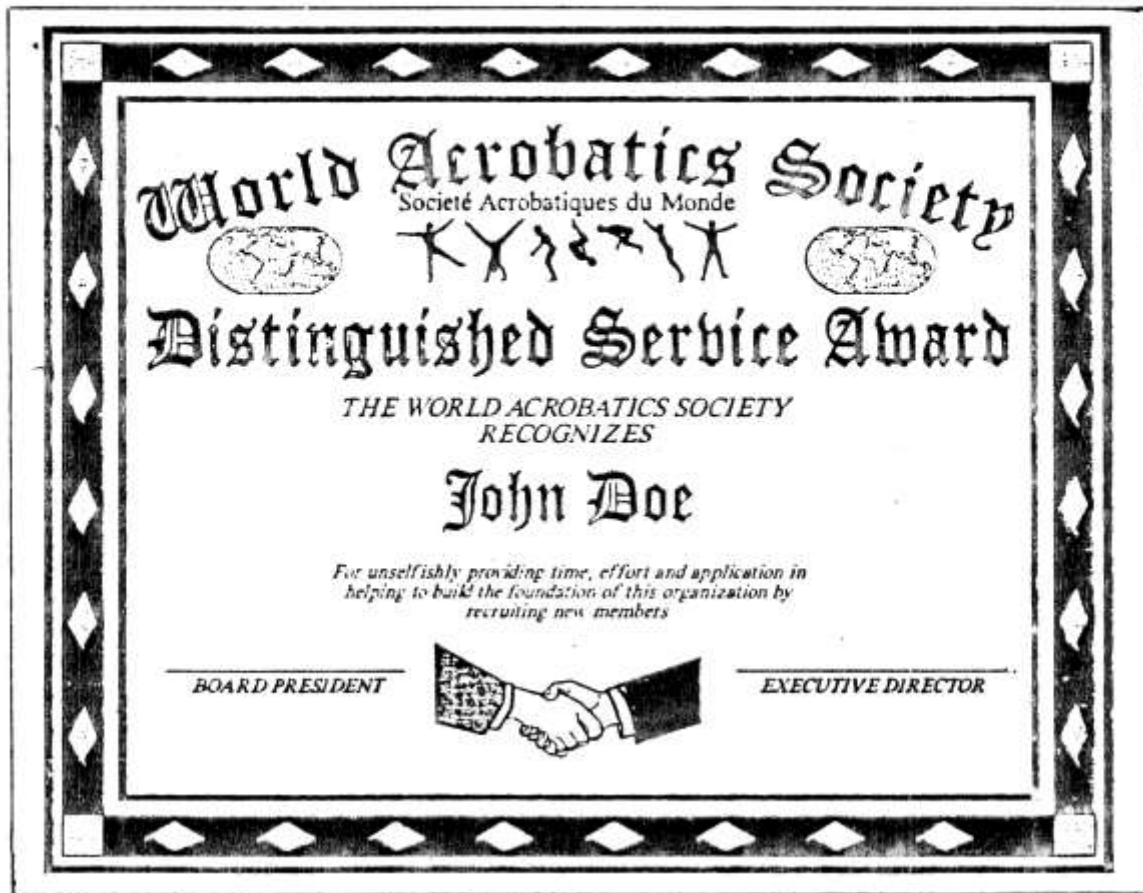
JOIN US NOW!

CERTIFICATES & AWARDS

Thus far, the **WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY** has developed **THREE** distinct types of certificates and awards: (1) *Life-Time Charter and Charter Membership Certificates*, pictured below at 35% normal size. These handsome and attractive 8-1/2 x 11 certificates are produced in full color, laminated and printed on gold astro-parch index stock. (2) *A Distinguished Service Award*, pictured on following page at 35% normal size, is also laminated, in full color and printed on 8-1/2 x 11 white astro-parch index stock. (3) *A W.A.S. Hall of Fame Award* (pictured on the following page at 35% normal size), is produced in full color, is laminated and is printed on 11 x 15 white tro-parch index stock. A total of 10 wallet size business or calling cards are also provided to each new W.A.S. member. These are also produced in full color on white astro-parch index stock. (See business card sample pictured below Membership Certificate on this page.



CERTIFICATES & AWARDS
(CONTINUED)



BIL COPP'S

1996

"FLORIDA WORKOUT!"

NAPLES, FLORIDA

DEC 26 - 30

***WILL HOST THE FIRST
INTERNATIONAL
W.A.S.
CONGRESS***



FUN! FUN! FUN!

ON THE SANDY BEACHES OF THE GULF COAST!

***MEET WORLD RENOWNED ACROBATS FROM
ALL OVER THE WORLD!***

MAKE YOUR PLANE RESERVATIONS NOW!

SEE YOU IN NAPLES!

***MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS GREAT EVENT WILL
BE FORTHCOMING IN OUR JULY NEWSLETTER!***

***IN OUR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS, WE
PLAN TO DEVOTE TWO FULL PAGES
TO EACH OF THE SEVEN MAJOR
ACROBATIC DISCIPLINES***

Beginning in the next issue (scheduled for July of this year), the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY plans to devote TWO FULL PAGES of coverage to each of the SEVEN major acrobatic disciplines. These disciplines have been identified by our organization to include the following:

**MEN & WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS
TRAMPOLINE & TUMBLING
MEN & WOMEN'S DIVING
SPORT ACROBATICS
FREE-STYLE SKIING
CHEERLEADING
PROFESSIONAL ACROBATICS**

*The first page will be devoted to PAST HISTORY
The second page will list CURRENT INFORMATION & EVENTS*

YOU

Can help us by sending us photos and useful information!



CURRENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACROBATS!



Are YOU a Tumbler, Trampolinist, Sports Acrobat, High-Flying Skier, Diver, Gymnast or other type of acrobat that's looking for a job in the professional world? If so, you might wish to take note of the following:



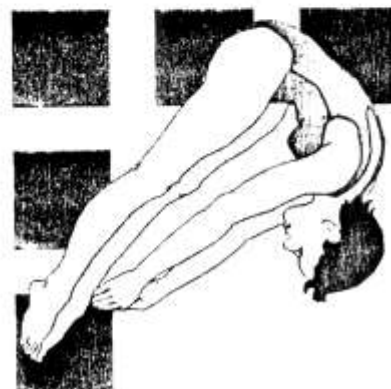
Is looking for fresh new acrobatic talent that would like to tour with The "Greatest Show on Earth" for the next two years. If interested, please contact

TIM HOLST
Vice-President
TALENT & PRODUCTION
267 S. Tamiami Trail,
NOKOMIS, FLA. 34275
Tel: (941) 484-9511
Fax: (941) 484-1283



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for
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For National & International Performances!
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(24 Hours per day)*





PROFESSIONAL ACROBATICS



If you want to see 21st century "acrobatics" at its best and some of the world's most artistic performers, you need to visit the internationally renowned "CIRQUE DU SOLEIL" the next time you are in Las Vegas! This show is absolutely incredible and there's nothing quite like it! Multiple horizontal bar casting, tumbling, trampoline, Chinese poles, teeter-board, acrobatic dance numbers, hand balancing and hilarious comedy are all part and parcel of this magnificent show!

With the exception of MONDAYS & TUESDAYS, when the auditorium is dark, the "CIRQUE DU SOLEIL MYSTÈRE" can be viewed five evenings per week at the TREASURE ISLAND HOTEL on the Las Vegas strip. Show times are 7:30 P.M. and 10:30 P.M. nightly. Get your tickets early and in advance, because the show is sold out nightly! The WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY is pleased to announce that four of its members are featured performers in the show! They are: Christopher Suszek, Bogdan Zujak, Rob Bollinger and Nathalie Bollinger.



THE INCOMPARABLE LARRY GRISWOLD

If ever there was a "Living Legend" in the field of professional acrobatics, it had to be LARRY GRISWOLD of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Beginning his professional career in 1929 with the "Billy Rose Aquacade", he was one of the featured comedy divers at the Ukrainian Village during the Century of Progress World's Fair in Chicago in 1933-34. Shortly after, Larry coached gymnastics at the University of Iowa where he met George Nissen. Together, they developed the concept of the modern Trampoline for both recreational and sporting use. While George kept busy manufacturing trampolines, Larry went on the show-biz circuit with his Trampoline and Diving board act. He performed on the Ed Sullivan Show many times and was featured at the Folies Bergere in Paris, France during the late 1960s. Loved by all and missed by many.....Larry, at age 90, is in a nursing home in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

NOTE!

DON (OTTO) ZAZADNEY
Presently performs Larry's
old act professionally

The above picture of Larry Griswold was taken in 1948 in Tampa, Florida where he performed at "Gasparilla Holiday" Fair. One of the world's most hilarious comedians, he entertained millions in both this country and in Europe. The WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY salutes one of the truly great acrobats of all time!

MEN & WOMENS DIVING

SINCE 1896!

*Since the first Olympiad in 1896,
Springboard & Platform Diving
have been world events! The United
States has mostly dominated diving
events in past years. Recently, the Chinese
and Russians have come to the fore.*

**WHOSE GOING TO WIN
IN ATLANTA?**



DICK SMITH
W.A.S. TREASURER



THIS is the publicity shot Bruce Harlan and Hobie Billingsley used when they were touring the country and overseas with their diving/trampoline/swimming act in the fifties.

TUMBLING & TRAMPOLINE



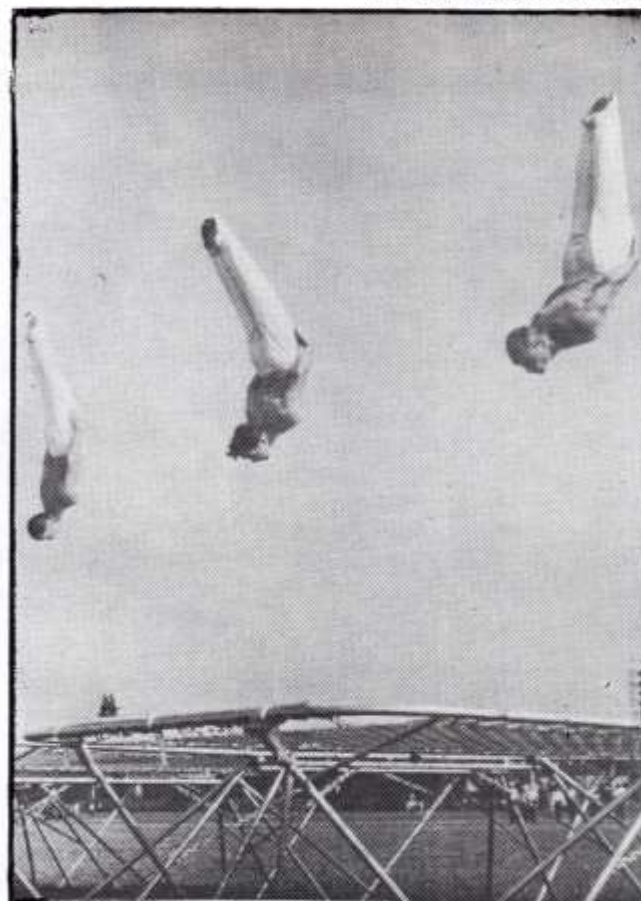
CHARLIE POND
W.A.S. VICE-PRESIDENT



THE MOST PUBLICIZED TRAMPOLINE PHOTO!

The above photo of George Nissen (taken in the 1950s), is perhaps, the most widely publicized -trampoline picture of all time. Picked up by newspapers everywhere, the photo was seen world wide.

Actually, it was a publicity stunt for a New York department store. George rented a kangaroo for the big event. We all know just how much George enjoyed the occasion. We are still not too sure how the kangaroo liked the deal!



In the mid 1950s, George Nissen, Frank LaDue and Swiss gymnast, Kurt Bachler introduced the trampoline to the Europeans. Pictured above (left-right) are Frank, Kurt and George performing at the Gymnast-rada. For many years thereafter, the U.S.A. dominated World trampoline competition. Today, the Europeans rule the roost!

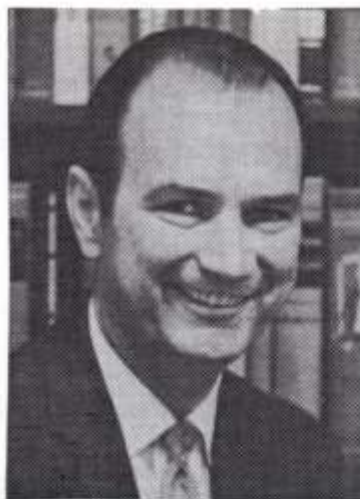
SPORTS ACROBATICS



*Pictured above is that great group of dedicated acrobats that originally formed the United States Sports Acrobatics Federation in 1970! **THREE** of the above "pioneers" are Life-Time Charter Members of W.A.S. Can you name them?*



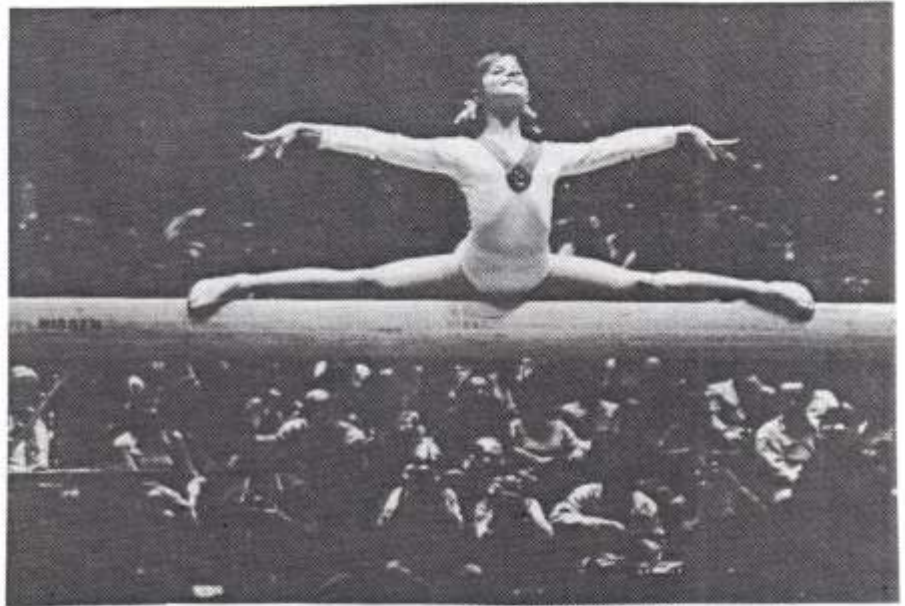
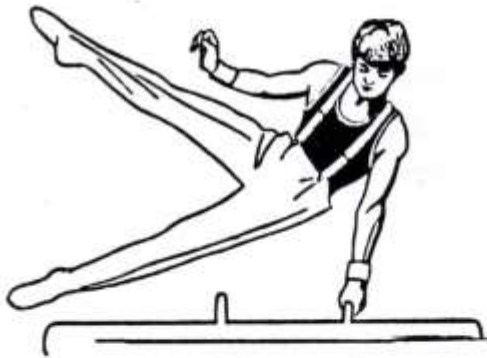
She was tiny...but, she was mighty! At a very early age, Paula Boelsems was able to perform professionally! She is pictured above on the Jackie Gleason Show in the 1950s! The Gleason Show was very popular during this era.



DR. JOSEPH SCHABACKER
Life-Time Honorary President
of the U.S.S.A.F.



MEN & WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS



*When Soviet gymnast **OLGA KORBUT** first toured this country in the early 1960s, she set a trend of excellence in Women's gymnastics that has endured to this day! Nadia's visits haven't hurt either! Pay attention "Super Stars" Mary Lou, Kim, Shannon and Dominique! You gals are great, but Olga paved the way for you!*



One of the greatest stimulants to American gymnastics was when George Nissen brought the first Soviet Men & Women's teams to this country in 1960! Pictured above is former child super tumbling star, Judi Wills with Polina Astakova and Coach Bob Hazlett. Michigan State Coach, George Szypula is pictured at the far left.

