



## Featured Competition Director

### Bonnie Boaz - Figure Skating



## From skater to judge to competition director

When Bonnie Boaz moved to Florida, she put her skating days behind her.

“I’m about an hour away from the nearest ice rink,” she says of her home in Port St. Lucie. “Two hours of driving for 45 minutes of skating just didn’t work.”

Luckily, serving as a judge and competition director for figure skating at the USA Masters Games feeds her need to be near the ice.

As a teen in Connecticut, Boaz was a competitive ice dancer. But after college, she did not have time to dedicate to her sport. She started her career as a teacher and moved several times, all to towns that did not have ice rinks.

“I had a 20-year hiatus,” she says, “and went back to skating when I moved to Chapel Hill (North Carolina) and my children got older.”

She competed for 10 years as a member of an adult synchronized skating team. For those who have never seen synchronized skating, picture synchronized swimming – but on ice. Teams of eight to 20 skaters work together as a single unit to execute challenging footwork in unison.

Boaz and her youngest daughter, Alicia, even competed on a team together while Alicia was in college, which drew the attention of Skating magazine. The publication featured the mother-daughter teammates in an article, Boaz says.

### Growing in the sport

While living in Chapel Hill, Boaz also became a figure skating judge for U.S. Figure Skating, the national governing body for the sport in the United States. Volunteering as a judge was a way to give back to the sport and to support young skaters, she says.

Boaz also served as volunteer coordinator for the 2011 and 2015 U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Greensboro, N.C. She took a month-long sabbatical from her teaching job for the unpaid position. Her responsibilities included everything from recruiting, vetting and training volunteers to making sure they had nametags and snacks the weekend of the event.

The next year, the USA Masters Games made its debut in Greensboro. With her connections in place and her work well known, Boaz was asked to serve as the competition director for figure skating. She also served as a judge for the competition, which was sanctioned by U.S. Figure Skating. Both are volunteer positions.

She'll take on both roles again this year as the USA Masters Games moves to San Diego.

### **Something for everyone**

One of the things Boaz likes about the USA Masters Games is that it offers events for nearly everyone – from adults who are just learning to skate to those who have never stopped competing. U.S. Figure Skating sanctions six levels of skating, and skaters are tested to determine their proficiency, similar to earning belts in karate, Boaz says.

In addition, the USA Masters Games groups competitors by age categories, offering events in pairs, singles, dance, and compulsory free skate jumps and spins that skaters execute without music.

As competition director, Boaz has been impressed by the quality of skaters the USA Masters Games attracts.

“These people are very dedicated,” she says. “They buy into the diet you need to be successful, the exercise and the training.”

“Many of them are doctors and lawyers who skate to get stress out of their lives. They are very meticulous in what they do. They are pretty amazing.”