

Evelyn Chandler was a charter member of NAWGJ. When the organization was formed in 1974, Evelyn was worried that she couldn't afford the \$15.00 dues on her teacher's salary. But Evelyn is a resourceful person and she found ways to earn some extra money to pay the dues and become a member. Since that time, Evelyn has been a State Judging Director, Regional Judging Director, Vice President, and President of NAWGJ.

She has been a true and consistent leader for the organization. Leaders must be committed to their mission. Evelyn's mission, both in her professional career and in judging, has been education. She obtained a doctorate in education in 2001 and quickly rose up the ranks of central administration in the Orlando schools. Her passion for education carried over to gymnastics where she was a clinician at the state, regional, and national levels.

Evelyn has also been deeply committed to professionalism among our members. She has been one of the biggest advocates for the NAWGJ Code of Conduct and Canons. Evelyn has also been the major advocate for the NAWGJ uniform. We've come a long way since the days of the polyester "association blue" skirts and reversible vests. Now, even though we grumble about our uniform, there's no denial that, as a group, our uniform sets us apart and marks us as professionals.

When we asked Evelyn about the highlights of her judging career. She said she was honored to be invited to the Brevet course in 1983 when it was such a highly selective process.

Another highlight of her career was being asked to be the STC at the USA vs USSR meet when it was held at the University of Florida in 1982. The STC, or Scientific Technical Collaborator, was responsible for accurately recording a routine in shorthand and determining the appropriate value parts and bonus.

Despite all of her accomplishments, Evelyn says the real highlights of her judging career have been the skits she produced at regional and national events. Somehow, she managed to get one of our elite national coaches, Tim Rand, to dress up as a judge, complete with high heels. At another symposium, Evelyn introduced the Cartwheel of Fortune game. Tom Koll, dressed in a stunning leotard, was the human cartwheel spun by each RJD as they tried to solve the puzzle ala the television show, Wheel of Fortune. If you get a chance to see the video, you will understand why Evelyn calls these skits one of the highlights of her judging career.

So, what has been the impact of judging on Evelyn's life? After thinking about it for a while, she said "Well, it's been my whole life." judges were there with her in good times, her marriage to Ernie for example, and in bad times, the turmoil surrounding Ernie's terminal illness. Judges were the ones who came to her house after Ernie died and helped her regroup after several stressful and traumatic years.

The judging community has created good times for her as well. There was a near-death walk in Panama during the International Panama Classic, an early morning stroll in Venice with her judging friends, a chance to carry the golf leader board at the 2016 Olympics in Rio, and a culinary tour in Charleston prior to the Charleston Cup.

Evelyn, thank you for all you have done for gymnastics and for NAWGJ. Earlier when I talked about the skits Evelyn directed, I didn't say that the Region 8 skit got a standing ovation from the 1997 crowd. We all join that same 1997 audience to give Evelyn a standing ovation for a job well done!

Congratulations Evelyn!