



NAWGJ History – The Beginning....

The following was written by Betty Sroufe and Carole Liedtke in the December 1999 issue of the National NAWGJ Newsletter in honor of NAWGJ 25th Anniversary.

On Thursday, November 7, 1974, the first NAWGJ meeting was held at the Chicago Sheraton Hotel in Chicago. This meeting was actually the first meeting of the NAWGJ National Board. The officers were: Kitty Kjeldsen of Maine - National Director; Joanne Aschenbrenner of Colorado - National Secretary and Betty Sroufe of Ohio National Treasurer. The original regional directors were: Region 1, Shirley Ruhlman and Judy Smith of California; Region 2, Arlene Crossman of Oregon; Region 3, Judy Bodman of Colorado; Region 4, Mary McLellan; Region 5, Linda Morton of Michigan; Region 6, Gail Davis of Connecticut; Region 7, Betty Lour Breeze of Maryland; Region 8, Wilma Guy of Alabama.

Frank Bare, Executive Director of USGF made the following points:

- The judges association, NAWGJ, should be totally neutral and NOT have any ties with any other group.
- The NAWGJ should be autonomous and not answer to the technical committee.
- People holding positions in both USGF and NAWGJ will have a reasonable time to choose one permanent position and drop the other position.
- NAWGJ should apply for membership on the USGF governing council. *(This was done when the NAWGJ constitution and bylaws were functioning. The first application was made Dec. 1, 1974.)*

Jackie Fie also attended. After a welcoming statement, she stated that USGF is behind the NAWGJ and wishes to help in any and every way. She pointed out the following four functions as paramount for NAWGJ.

- To schedule all judges for state and regional competitions.
- To assist in the dissemination of technical information.
- To cooperate with Delene Darst in the judges training program.
- To work with DGWS, AAU, the High School Federation, etc. on the state level, at their request, in the assigning of judges.

The preliminary development of NAWGJ started at JCI meetings in the mid-1960's when the Joint Certification Committee (USGF, NAWGS and JCI), including Kitty Kjeldsen, Shirley Bryant, Delene Darst and Mary McClellan discussed the creation of a professional organization to represent certified judges. They had visions of being more than just an assigning organization. Delene developed the constitution and Kitty Kjeldsen was the first president.

NAWGJ - NUMBER OF MEMBERS:

1,671 in 1975; 1,851 in 1998; 2,383 in 1999; 2,864 in 2001; 2,077 in 2015

1975 - Membership dues - \$15.00 per year for the judges with a Regional or National rating. For those with other ratings, the fee is \$10.00.

1975 Judging Fees: per session:

FIG Brevet and FIG National: \$25 plus \$.12 a mile and \$20.00 per diem.

National: \$25 plus \$.12 a mile and \$20.00 per diem.

Regional: \$15 plus \$.12 a mile.

State and Local: \$10

Associate: \$8

Apprentice: \$5

Cost of uniform - Jacket and Skirt 1984 \$125

1984 - Carole Bunge and Betty Sroufe gave a report and NAWGJ decided to buy an IBM PC Computer.

Continuous NAWGJ members from 1974 until 1999

Sue Ammerman, N

Annette Asmus, NY

Peggy Bialla, VA

Shirley Bruck, AZ

Kathy Case, KY

Evelyn Chandler, FL (still current in 2014)

Nancy Claar, TX

Lois Colburn, MA (still current in 2014)

Marilyn Cross, NY

Delene Darst, NC

Maria DeCristoforo, NY

Jeanne Devenney, NJ

Judy Grenfell, MO

Yvonne Hodge KY

Linda Hopkins, NY

Kitty Kjeldsen, CT (deceased 2004)

Ellen Kovac, NJ

Martha Kunka, PA

Carole Liedtke, KY (still current in 2014)

Mary McLellan, WI

Linda Morton, MI (still current in 2014)

Sandy Oldham, IL (still current in 2014)

Louise Peck, SC

Cynthia Posmoga, PA

Audrey Schweyer, PA

Cindy Sielski, NY

Betty Sroufe, OH

Karen Wisen, WA (deceased 2014)

Pam Zak, HI (still current in 2014)

Communication

Message in the 1998 National Newsletter:

“Return telephone calls within 48 hours and respond to letters within two weeks.”

We have progressed from the newsletters, phone calls and snail mail to emails and the National Website.

National Newsletters. Robin Ruegg was the RJD in Region 4 and asked Carole Ide if she would consider having a website. Robin started the website with the help of a coach/web designer from Illinois. Judy Hoferlin took over in 2004 and still maintains the site!

NAWGJ LIBRARY By Judy Dobransky

Yvonne Hodge started in NAWGJ as a Regional Judging Director for Region 5. That was 1974 – 75. When she stepped down from that position, the NGB wanted her to stay on the board, so they restructured somewhat and created the position of LIBRARIAN (with a Historical emphasis) and named Mrs. Hodge to the role. At that time Yvonne was not a typist, nor was she a computer literate Magnolia! But she was of “steelier” stuff and became our President! Our original shorthand and educational mailings were all handwritten!

“Vonnie? Or Sissonie” (as she was tenderly called), This is Judy Dobransky, and I have a proposition for you. I don't want an election, or a voting position, nor do I need to be on the board. (I had served as Michigan SJD & Co SJD for 12 years. I was already on my state board and that was fine.) All I want to do is help to educate our judges and build our library! Can I take your position and get that ball rolling?” She checked with her board, and the deed was done!

Joining forces with the Queen of “Judging Things” and the world's most organized, efficient and dear friend since 1985 - Brenda Eberhardt of Louisiana - we started production. Then I found David Yellen and with his skills behind the camera and his love of the sport we had arrived!

From 1 and 2 disks we have grown and blossomed with our video productions and presentations. Brenda has created aid after aid and provides our association with “THINGS” of all kinds...and our inventory continues to grow! We have accumulated excellent vendors and have developed a National Library with Goods and Goodies to promote and enhance education. It has been a self-sufficient part of NAWGJ and the more we sell, the more we put back.

It's been an AMAZING ride!! And we still have plenty of Fuel to keep going! We truly appreciate the support of the judges and the gymnastic family that we nurture with all of our “stuff”.