

Thanks to NAWGJ Region V

I was truly touched by the thoughtful and generous gift given to me by Hilary Carlson from the Region V NAWGJ. I love the vintage, engraved watch and even had on similar matching vintage jewelry. The donation to Heifer International was so conscientious of what I try to preach about recycling and caring for our earth. The trip to Michigan was overwhelming and Joe and I look forward to going next summer.

I started competing in 1960, judging in 1965 and coached as I did both. We envisioned an opportunities. Most kids involved were finding a sport offered to them free of charge at their high school, YMCA, Turners, and other organizations. The coaches and judges volunteered the majority of their time until the 80's (though I do remember getting a check at AAU Nationals after three days of judging for \$5). We enjoyed giving of our time and learning as we went along to be able to teach and judge this sport. We all loved gymnastics and still do.

I have only had a few bad experiences and have always tried to keep a positive outlook, follow and help make the rules with everyone in mind, guide and mentor, keep update, and respect those around me. I have tried to be consistent, ethical and fair and to do what is in the best interest of the sport. I have developed some unique ideas and activities but have been in hopes of using those as motivating and enhancing the enjoyment of the sport.

I have enjoyed and had the privilege of traveling to many foreign countries and all around the US, meeting many different people and hopefully leaving good impressions for USA Gymnastics. I have met many people, listened to many problems, advised when I could and mediated misunderstandings as best I could. I have taken the judging test every four years trying to understand why I must do so again and again, but realizing the study would benefit my professional ability. I have held the offices of Regional Chair, Regional Technical Director, State NAWGJ Director and Regional NAWGJ Director, hopefully formulating strong guidelines and running the offices to the benefit of the region. I now continue participating by judging, doing clinics and critiques and being on the USAG and NAWGJ Kentucky State boards. I currently enjoy being with my family, golfing, ballroom dancing, caring for the yard and house, volunteering at our YMCA and traveling.

I have a few regrets that I would have handled a few situations differently, that I should have not put gymnastics as priority over a few missed family activities, and that I isolated myself from making some close friends with whom I could be relating to now because I was always spending time with gymnastics. However, I have met many people who I admire, enjoy being with and feel they are also friends. I still volunteer at clinics, camps and teaching whenever anyone will listen.

My hopes are that each of you would take time to volunteer at local Y's, for those underprivileged, with Special Olympics, sponsoring a gymnast or judge who can't afford classes or team or anything that would enhance allowing another person to be touched by the great sport of gymnastics. The benefits can teach lifelong values of hard work, self confidence, physical and mental improvement and abilities to handle everyday activities. I have loved gymnastics for its artistic beauty and its concomitant values and I hope many of you will spend your lifetime doing the same.

And don't forget to recycle, reduce and reuse to help our planet.



Carole Liedtke

A poem I wrote in 1986:

Gyms all over the world.
Years of many memories.
More to come, much enthusiasm.
Never a dull moment.
Another change in rules.
Sweat, study, seminars, symbols, sit.
Teaching others, tears, tests.
Inspire, inquire, innovate.
Challenge
Satisfaction and smiles.

Thank you again Carole Liedtke