

2011 Lynda Garland Award Announced

July 4, 2011 - The Lynda Garland "Award for Excellence" was presented for the third time at the Canadian Baton Twirling Championships in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The recipient of Lynda Garland's "Award for Excellence" was Ron Kopas, of Brampton, Ontario.

At the 2008 Canadian Championships in Moncton, NB, the CBTF recognized Lynda Garland's years of service to Baton Twirling in Canada and around the world by creating a new award that bears her name. Among Ms. Garland's many accomplishments, she was one of the founders of the Twirl Canada organization and was its first President from 1979 through 1983. Twirl Canada went on to become the [Canadian Baton Twirling Federation](#) [1] (CBTF), which was a charter member of the [World Baton Twirling Federation](#) [2](WBTF) when it was formed. Lynda served as President of the World Baton Twirling Federation between 1983 and 2008.

Ms. Garland established the criteria for the new award. The Lynda Garland "Award For Excellence" is presented to a Canadian Baton Twirling Federation (CBTF) Coach who exemplifies excellent, progressive coaching, superior technical abilities and provides innovative ideas and programs.

In presenting the award, Ms. Garland touched on the many highlights of Mr. Kopas' career:

I have known Ron for over 45 years. He is not only a coach, but is a local, provincial, national and international judge, as well as being a World Baton Twirling Federation clinician. He was one of Canada's first judges to judge at the World Baton Twirling Championships in 1980, in Seattle, Washington, USA. Ron was selected to judge the first WBTF International Cup in St. Paul, Minnesota, USA in 1995 and was the only WBTF judge to do so. He was honoured for this achievement at the World Baton Twirling Championships and International Cup that was held in Hamilton, Ontario in 2007.

Ron is also a family man. He and his lovely wife Heather have been married for over 40 years. He has two wonderful sons and two beautiful grandchildren. Ron has coached his sons Paul and Steven to become dedicated athletes, good citizens and great professionals.

Ron's twirling career started off with the Dorothy Hurst Majorettes and Drum Corps. Her famous group performed locally and nationally, plus they performed at half time, at the Tiger Cats Football games for several years, as well as attending numerous Grey Cup Parades.

Ron has been several times Canadian Men's Baton Twirling Champion. He was also the coach of the well-known Ronettes, Montage, Mississauga Royal Flash and Phoenix baton twirlers and drum corps. His group and drum corps were synonymous for winning numerous local, provincial and national championships. He championed these groups for over 20 years.

Ron has coached and developed the sport of baton twirling through clinics, workshops and summer camps. On a provincial level, many groups bring him in as a choreographer. On a national basis, Ron has coached at clinics across the country from New Brunswick to Alberta. Internationally, he has been a coach at Elaine Jacob's summer camp in Watkins Glen, New York for numerous years. He has coached at the International Twirling Teacher's Institute for several years, as well as the World Baton Twirling Federation International Clinics, clinics being held in Japan, Italy and the USA. Ron travels to Ireland and Scotland to coach on a yearly basis.

Ron has been the World Baton Twirling Federation Technical Chair from 1988 to 1992 (5 years); Canadian Baton Twirling Federation Technical Chair from 1981 to 1992 (11 years); Canadian Baton Twirling Federation Judges Chair from 1996 to 2000 (4 years) and the Ontario Technical Chair from 2004 to 2008 (4 years). In total, 23 years of building

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on his coaching career.

Ron is qualified as a:

- CBTF S1 Adjudicator
- CBTF Level 2 Coach
- CBTF Judge – fully qualified to judge all modules
- World Baton Twirling Federation Master Judge
- World Baton Twirling Federation Master Clinician

Ron coaches athletes in for the following disciplines:

- Compulsories
- Short Program
- Freestyle
- Pairs and Team
- WBTF International Cup events – Solo, 2 and 3 baton, Artistic Twirl, Artistic Pairs, Team and Group.

On the world level, Jennie Spooner, from Australia, competed at the World Baton Twirling Championships for many years. Ron coached Jennie the year she attended worlds in Japan, 2004.

As a mentor, coach and friend, Ron coached one of our own prestigious judges, Brenda Cooper, who is a well renowned judge at the local, provincial, national and international level.

What more could we ask for from a great, respected and highly successful coach, who is still coaching.

Ron and I have travelled to every World Baton Twirling Championships from 1980 to 2008, when I retired as the World Baton Twirling Federation President following 25 years as being President. I am truly proud of Ron and all his achievements.

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