

## 2016 Lynda Garland Award Announced

**July 7, 2016** - The Lynda Garland "Award for Excellence" was presented for the eighth time at the Canadian Baton Twirling Championships in Edmonton, Alberta. The recipient of Lynda Garland's "Award for Excellence" was LeeAnn Wilson of Oshawa, 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 the 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 Ms. Wilson's career:

Lee Ann Wilson was signed up for baton twirling and ballet lessons in the Fall of 1965 with the Harvey Dance Academy in Oshawa. She decided to retire from ballet and continue with baton lessons. It was time to move on to a more serious competitive environment. After working with Diana Hutton she then moved to one of Canada's top coaches and choreographers, Betty Feist Lyons of Hamilton, Ontario. With Betty, LeeAnn won Junior Miss Majorette of Canada in 1973; Canadian Twirling Champion 1973 to 1976, Miss Majorette of Ontario 1974 to 1977, and finalist in the Teenage Miss Majorette of America in 1977. The highlight of LeeAnn's competitive career was placing 5th at the NBTA National Majorette Championships held in St. Paul Minnesota in 1976. There were 106 Senior twirlers competing for a top 6 spot to finals and she did it. This event is still a prestigious competition held each year at America's Youth On Parade (AYOP).

In 2005 LeeAnn was awarded the CBTF Life Time Achievement Ward for her years of dedication and her passion for the Sport of Baton Twirling. In 2009 the Ontario Coaching Association awarded LeeAnn the Ontario Coaching Excellence Award. In 2007 LeeAnn was proud to be the first baton twirler (and to date the only) to be inducted into the Oshawa Sports Hall of Fame. Later she was asked to sit on the Board of Governors for the Oshawa Hall of Fame where she is thrilled to be associated with over 30 sports in the City of Oshawa.

LeeAnn has been a registered judge since 1978 and in 1980 she was selected to sit on the panel at the first ever Twirl Canada National Team Trials held in Saskatoon. The team represented Canada at the first World Baton Twirling Championships, held in Seattle Washington. LeeAnn attended the Worlds as a spectator and knew the progression of the sport was moving in the right direction. Other judging credits were World Baton Twirling Championships, WBTF International Cup in 2008, Twirl Mania Gold and Congressional Cup Invitational. While LeeAnn retains her judging certification, her true passion is coaching. She has been a Coach with Team Canada at the WBTF World Baton Twirling Championships and the WBTF International Cup since 2006.

The Camaros have hosted an open competition for over 30 years. LeeAnn's organization skills have made her an asset as Competition Director for several Canadian Championships including 1994, 2010 and 2015. She has also worked on the World Organizing Committees in 1994, 2007 and 2015. Her contribution to the sport at the Administration level has seen her as the Ontario Baton Twirling Association President, Technical Director,

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Treasurer, and currently Past President. LeeAnn also holds the position as the Canadian Baton Twirling Federation Group Representative.

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[1] <http://www.cbtf.ca> [2] <http://www.wbtf.org/>