

# AMAZING ANGEL: Mrs. Margarita Sears and the Will Sears Fund

by EDWARD Z. EPSTEIN



Margarita and sister Olga

There is nothing more inspiring and moving than a human being's triumph over a personal tragedy, over loss...

Margarita Sears is an example.

She suffered an incalculable loss when her twenty-year-old son, Ariel William "Will" Sears, died in 2002. Will, with partner Katie Boxwell, had just won the U.S. Novice pair title, and an important skating career seemed imminent.

Will had been described as a "Renaissance man" — he was editing music for Johnny Weir; he'd written a screenplay, "Dare Greatly," and was studying acting.

His inexplicable death came as a shock.

Mrs. Sears was determined to preserve her beloved son's memory, and The Will Sears Fund was created; over the years it has contributed to a number of causes that would have been dear to Will's heart. Lucy Brennan, ISU judge and referee and veteran SCNY member, has noted: "All of us want to help develop pairs in the U.S. and we felt doing that was the best way to honor Will." For the past several years, The Will Sears Fund has contributed funds to hold pair critiques and seminars at the annual Middle-Atlantic States championships at Chelsea Piers in New York City.

The Fund has also been a faithful supporter of ITNY; recently, it has expanded into commissioning new works for the company (the latest will be created by Doug Webster).

"If ever there was someone worthy of our annual Ice Angel Award, it's Mrs. Sears," notes ITNY founder Moira North Colton. "She's an inspiration to those of us who know her, and an angel indeed to all of those she helps. Congratulations, Margarita. We love you."



Ice Rink Events has grown to become a leading designer, manufacturer, installer, and operator of ice skating rink facilities worldwide. Inspired by their own years on the ice, Mike Clayton and Lena Gottschall, partners in life and business, have as their distinct mission to bring ice sports, ice performances, and the joy of ice skating to the masses.

Ice Rink Events' winter venues host more than 2,000,000 public skaters each season. Its flagship locations include the super-sized outdoor "Mega Rink" at The Zocalo in Mexico City, and "Skating By The Sea" on the beach at the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego. It has made ice surfaces for Hallmark, ABC-TV, FOX-TV's "Skating With Celebrities", and CBC's "Battle of the Blades". It has constructed outdoor stadium hockey rinks for the NHL Winter Classic, and for the "The Big Chill at The Big House" at the University of Michigan, with a record-setting 113,000 in attendance. It will also be making ice for upcoming productions of Disson Skating, which air on NBC.

The company makes ice for the U.S. and World Figure Skating Championships, most recently at the Worlds in Los Angeles, and the Nationals in Greensboro. It will be making ice for the 2013 Nationals in Omaha.

Ice Rink Events has been a major force in the creation of Citi Pond at Bryant Park, Newport Skates in Jersey City, the City Ice Pavilion in Queens, and the World Ice Arena at Flushing Meadows Corona Park, led by the company's New York manager and long-time rink veteran Ron Kraut.

Mike Clayton and Lena Gottschall are proud to support Ice Theatre of New York, including Moira North, Jirina Ribbens, and their creative and innovative team of choreographers and skaters, who bring outreach programs and performances to all of Ice Rink Events' locations in New York City.

