



## **RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS IN CANADA SIMPLY WOULD'T EXIST IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE EFFORTS OF EVELYN KOOP.**

Help us develop the beautiful sports of Rhythmic Gymnastics and Aesthetic Group Gymnastics in Canada! Kalev Estienne depends on private support to maintain a high level of athlete development and to help fund International competitions. We would greatly appreciate your support to help make these competitions a success for our Canadian girls and all the visiting international delegations. As you can imagine, the costs of running such an



event are high, and any help you could provide in the form of donations or advertising support would be greatly appreciated. In return, depending on your level of sponsorship, we would be happy to offer you seating for the competition, advertising space in the event program and an opportunity to display your banner at the event and/or on our websites. The name Kalev Estienne is synonymous with Rhythmic Gymnastics development in Canada and we thank for your support in continuing the tradition!

**We're looking forward to seeing you on APRIL 23 – 26, 2020 at the Markham Pan Am Centre, 16 Main Street, Unionville (Toronto GTA) and thank you for your support!**

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**WHO IS EVELYN KOOP?** Affectionately known as "The Godmother" of the sport in Canada, Evelyn is recognized as being the one who actually brought the sport to North America and fostered its growth nation-wide. The Kalev Sport Club first introduced Rhythmic Gymnastics (RG) to Canada over 60 years ago. You just need to look at the Kalev Estienne website and you will find 69 years of highlights from bringing the sport of RG to Canada, developing World & Olympic gymnasts to hosting Provincial, National and International Events.

Evelyn Koop, the founder & President of Kalev Estienne, has been involved as a gymnast, coach, performer, choreographer, educator, author, administrator, judge, event manager and most importantly ...remains as one of the major promoters of Rhythmic Gymnastics in Canada and volunteer extraordinaire!

Evelyn has been working hard ever since to build its legacy as one of Canada's most prominent Rhythmic Gymnastics Centres. Having taught Rhythmic Gymnastics at the

University of Toronto, McMaster University, McGill University, she is considered a foremost authority on the sport. She authored books “Basic Rhythmics” and “Judging”, developed Technical Manuals, By-laws, and Constitutions.



Under the leadership of Evelyn Koop tens of thousands of gymnasts have come to share her love of the sport. She has trained many teachers and coaches and created awareness of RG through endless touring with her gymnasts throughout Canada and the United States. I was fortunate as a young artistic gymnast to have Evelyn come to our club to assist with upper body movement for beam & floor.

In 1968, Evelyn along with a few others formed the Modern Gymnastics Federation and later the Canadian Rhythmic Sportive Gymnastics Federation. 1971 was the year Evelyn received international standing as a judge and was awarded a Brevet 2. She was also a member of the FIG RG Technical Committee. From 1976 to 1980, and in 1998 she was awarded the FIG Honorary Diploma “in recognition of her long –term distinguished service as an International Judge at the World Level”. 1976 proved to be a busy year. Evelyn was the lead choreographer for the opening Ceremonies of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal. Evelyn worked hand in hand with Juri Titov, President of FIG and others to get RG accepted as an Olympic Sport. 1976 was also the year she initiated “The Maple Leaf” International Meet which was held for four consecutive years. In 1978 she created the Pan Pacific Championships, which later became the Four Continents Championships.

These events were created with one main goal in mind... to give Canadian rhythmic gymnasts the opportunity to experience international competition. Evelyn has always been passionate about growing the sport so that all Canadians can participate and learn about the beautiful sport of Rhythmic Gymnastics. Evelyn deserves recognition for her continuous commitment and energy in exposing Canadian gymnasts to International Competition in Canada. Many of her former gymnasts are still with her as coaches, in her performance groups, as staff or return as dedicated volunteers that assist with the hosting of her successful events.

### **TRADITION OF BUILDING OLYMPIANS.**

Evelyn has recruited many world-renowned coaches & judges which helped spearhead the development of RG in Canada. In 1976 Evelyn choreographed for the opening ceremonies of the Olympics and, by demonstrating rhythmic gymnastics, opened the door for it becoming an Olympic sport.



RG became an official sport at the Olympic Games in 1984. BC gymnast Lori Fung, a former member of Kalev was crowned the Olympic Champion. The second gymnast, Adrienne Dunnet was also from Kalev.

Representing Kalev at the 1996 Olympics was Camille Martins and in 2000 Emilie Livingston. As you can see Evelyn was responsible for producing a lot of firsts. Alexandra Orlando, a gymnast who received her initial training at Kalev went on to represent Canada in the 2008 Olympics. In 2010, it was the Kalev Junior Group that represented the America's at the first Youth Olympic Games and captured the Bronze medal. The group became part of the Olympic Games in 1996. The Senior group from Kalev made history qualifying Canada to their first Olympic Games in London 2012.

**AGG DEVELOPMENT.** Kalev is now the umbrella organization for gymnastics centres, one of the most recent being the Kalev AGG Academy, which began in 1995 as a rhythmic dance company, when Evelyn Koop, the founder of the *Rhythmic Expressions* realized an old dream: to create a company that could lift the sport to levels where it would be recognized as one of the performing arts. It would also mean returning to the roots of the sport: the rhythmic group performance, now called Aesthetic Group Gymnastics (AGG).

Kalev has the most successful AGG teams in Canada, reaching the finals in almost all of the AGG World Championships since 2002. The creator of the Four Continents Championships in RG, and one of the crusaders behind RG's acceptance into the Olympics, Evelyn is now doing for Aesthetic Group Gymnastics (AGG) what she did for RG years earlier, namely, provide a venue where non-European gymnasts have a chance to win medals in an international competition.



**KOOP CUP.** In 1991 Evelyn Koop began “The World’s Best” international invitational competition which the Canadian Gymnastics Federation later named the “Koop Cup” in her honor. The reason for the competition was to give Canadians an opportunity to achieve higher honors than possible at the World Championships and to allow them to compete in their own backyard and be motivated and inspired by the world’s best.

In 2017 Evelyn Koop President & Program Director of Kalev Estienne celebrated their 69th anniversary promoting Rhythmic Gymnastics in Canada & her club. Kalev continues to host Provincial, National & International Events.



This year alone, Kalev under the management of Evelyn Koop hosts the famous Koop Cup event. ***The 2020 Koop Cup International Invitational RG Competition*** provide a wonderful opportunity for our Canadian gymnasts to see, compete and perform with, and be inspired by the best gymnasts in the world. She even gets the Mayor of Markham to come out to these events to help present awards.

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*Thank you to Teresa Orr, National Team Director of Rhythmic Gymnastics presented Evelyn Koop with the Dr. Gene Sutton Memorial Award. Her words of kindness are above.*