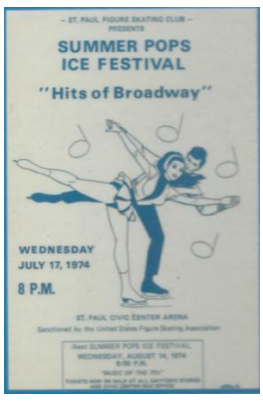
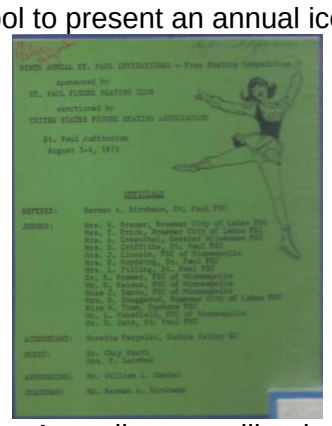
The 1970s....hold fast to your dreams….

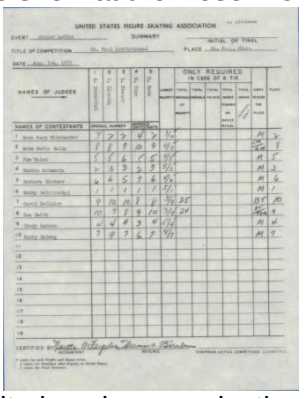
During the early 1970s, the St. Paul FSC continued to provide ice time for members at Wakota Arena, Aldrich Arena, Roseville Arena, St. Paul Civic Center Arena in addition to the St. Paul Auditorium. By the end of the decade, Augsburg College Arena had been added to the list.

The Summer Ice Sessions continued with early morning patch sessions and evening practices for the Club's "Summer Pops Ice Festivals". The show continued to feature various US Champions, ice comic Roundhouse Rodney of WTCN-TV in addition to the numerous upcoming stars of the St. Paul FSC. Skaters remember spending whole summer days downtown St. Paul, skating patches and freestyles before spending lunchtime at the Bridgeman's Restaurant. The evening ice was reserved for dance sessions and ice show practice. The coaches at this time included former member Bona Beckstrom, Barbara Hartwig Castaneda, Mary Lou Gerebi, Vivi-Anne Hulten, Dianne Ness and Karen and Dick Vraa.



In addition to the Summer Pops Ice Festivals, the St. Paul FSC was involved in many other shows during this time including shows for corporate events such as the 1974 Rotary International Convention held at the St. Paul Civic Center Arena and 3M Companies. The Club staged many benefit ice shows including the "Holiday Ice Benefits" for disabled children held at the Wakota Arena in 1971 and 1972. These events attracted distinguished guests including Senators Hubert Humphrey, Robert Stassen, George Perpich as well as several Mayors. The Club also joined forces with Roseville Skating School to present an annual ice show at the Roseville Ice Arena.





As well as excelling in its ice show productions, the Club continued to hold the non qualifying St. Paul Invitational Summer Competition each year.

St. Paul FSC skaters visit the State Capitol and meet Governor Wendell Anderson.

Rosie Wilzbacher & David Bolton
1973

Rosie Wilzbacher & Rick Turley
1974

St. Paul FSC 1973 Upper Great Lakes Competitors: (standing) Lisa Kuehn, Lisa Tobin, Carol Le Claire, Kim Halweg, Shannon O'toole, Rosemary Wilzbacher, Dave Bolton, Wendy Leimbek, Kay Tani, Cindy Larson, Kathy Halweg, Debbi Schwartz (kneeling) Mary Pat Bagan, Michele Mandel, Kari Reinhardt, Lana Kieffer, Barb Bichner [Not pictured: Becky Leroy, Laurie Nelson, Mary Schuster]

St. Paul FSC skaters continued to succeed at qualifying competitions during the 1970s. Many skaters competed at Midwesterns in both single and pairs events. The National competitors during this decade included Rosie Wilzbacher who paired with David Bolton and Rick Turley consecutively in 1973 and 1974, placing fourth each time, and Barbara Bichner who competed at the Novice level. In 1973 Wilzbacher and Turley went on to skate in both the Ice Follies and the Ice Capades.

from St. Paul Pioneer Press, 1975

Long practice hours pays off perfectly for St. Paul skater

Years of skating practice that meant a 5 a.m. wakeup call have paid off for a St. Paul woman who has signed a contract with Ice Follies. Rose Mary Wilzbacher, daughter of Mrs Leo Wilzbacher and the late Mr Wilzbacher, will travel to Oakland, CA June 19 to begin Ice Follies rehearsals with her pair partner, Rick Turley .

"I didn't really intend to audition at all," explained Rose Mary, 20, who is completing her sophomore year in nursery school education at the University of Minnesota. She said that she and her partner have been skating in competition for two years and for three years before that she skated with a different man.

The couple captured the 1974 Midwestern Junior Pair title and went on to place 4th at the 1974 US Nationals. This year they had bad luck when, after qualifying for the National competition in senior pairs, Rose Mary fell during practice, fracturing her pelvic bone and forcing a temporary end to her skating.

"So we had decided not to compete this year," she said. "The standings at the national level are going to stay pretty much as they are now. This is an Olympic year and nobody is going to give up their place. We wouldn't have made the top three - it would have taken too much money." While Rose Mary kept on with her studies at the university, Rick wanted to join a show. When the Ice Follies audition team came to the Twin Cities, Rick asked her if she would skate with him just so he could have a partner, hoping eventually to team with another woman in the show. "I said the audition sounded like fun," Rose Mary said. "I was really happy when they told us they were impressed with us as a pair. Then they offered us a contract and I had to do some deep thinking."

It took Rose Mary about a week to decide to join the show. Although she enjoys school, she knows this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to skate and learn. And since careers of professional skaters often don't last past the age of 30, she will have time later in life to return to her education.

In the Ice Follies, Rick and Rose Mary will be pair understudies (which means more money) and they will also do couples numbers with other members of the ensemble. She says she is already looking forward to April of 1976 when the Follies will arrive in St. Paul so friends and family can see her skate in a professional show.

Rose Mary got the skating fever 11 years ago when she saw St. Paul's Bobby Mecay skate here. The family lived down the block and Rose Mary asked Bobby's mother how she could learn to skate. She was sent to St. Psul FSC and there pro skater Barb Castaneda worked with Rose Mary through her grade school years at St. Luke's and during her high school days at St. Joseph Academy and Our Lady of Peace.

"It meant practice every day, usually two hours before school and two hours after, "Rose Mary said. "It meant getting up at 5 a.m." Now it's all worth it, as Rose Mary prepared to accept an opportunity she says "I'll never get again."