



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Stapleton families,

Here we are, midway through the school year and there are so many exciting things happening! From the start of our school year, there has been a wonderful difference in the energy and attitude of our students, faculty and families. I believe this can be credited to the faculty and the board of directors, for their time, effort and unwavering dedication to our school and its mission to provide a healthy, respectful environment for our children.

The "Back to Ballet" program this fall was the brainchild of our board of directors: Martha Lee, Maureen Kohn, Bernie O'Halloran, Lorien Fenton, and Julie Kimball. They came up with the ambitious goal of meeting with every class during the first week of school, to greet our dancers and parents and answer their questions about our school and encourage more involvement. A committee made up of board members, parent volunteers, and school alumni was able to accomplish this goal, and it seems to have resulted in a renewed positive energy within our community. We strongly believe that it is only by working together that we can accomplish our goal of creating a wonderful, nurturing, energetic and positive environment for our children. This fabulous attitude carried on into our *Nutcracker* production, which truly embodies what our school is all about. Students, faculty, and parents worked together in harmony and respect to achieve a wonderful atmosphere that ultimately resulted in a beautiful *Nutcracker* production. Everyone involved contributed to make the 2005 production the best ever; I can personally say that I have never enjoyed a process more. Sincere thanks to students and parents alike, for your wonderful contributions, making everyone's *Nutcracker* experience a wonderful, fulfilling one.

Phone: 555-555-5555
Fax: 555-555-5555
E-mail: someone@example.com

Message from the New Executive Director

I am extremely excited and proud to join the Stapleton team. In addition to the privilege of working with the incredible Virginia Stapleton, I look forward to working with our talented faculty and our energetic, wonderful community of families.

One of my immediate goals is to increase communication with our families, and to that end, the *Pas de Chat* will now be published monthly. I'll be sharing some of the important behind-the-scenes work our dedicated Board of Directors is doing; faculty profiles; dance news; and news about our tal-

I have a fantastic announcement, one that will have a most profound and wonderful effect on all of us in the Stapleton community. The Board of Directors and myself have been searching for a school administrator for over a year. We are pleased and proud to announce that Sharon Burns has joined our school as Executive Director. Sharon was the former Recreation Supervisor at San Anselmo Recreation, where she worked for over fifteen years. For the past dozen years, she has worked after hours helping the Stapleton School with many projects, including public relations, the *Pas de Chat* newsletter, annual schedule and registration packet, and *Nutcracker* rehearsal schedule. Sharon is an amazingly skilled multi-tasker, and brings a multitude of talents to our organization. In her role at the Recreation Dept., she was the Executive Producer of the award-winning community theater group, The Town Players, as well as supervising all day to day operations and programming. Here at Stapleton, Sharon will oversee all operational functions of our school, including office management, finance, and production management. She brings her skills in programming and her extensive contacts, and will be working on incorporating new programs and interesting classes compatible with the performing arts and philosophy of our school. The addition of Sharon as Executive Director will free some of my time that is currently consumed by tactical and administrative functions. I will be able to better focus on my role as Artistic Director and continue to challenge our dancers and our Youth Company in creating new works. Please join me in welcoming Sharon.

Please support our school by planning to attend our spring concert. See the related story in this newsletter.

Best wishes for the New Year!

Virginia

ented students. If you have an item you would like included in the Dancer's Corner (e.g. a special accomplishment), or suggestions for future articles, please email me at sharon@stapletonschool.org or call me at 454-5759.

I will be in the office daily, Monday through Friday, and I will have Thursday evening hours from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in order to better assist you. Please stop by the office and say "hi". I'm thrilled to be part of an organization that makes such a positive impact on our children's lives and the community.

CALENDAR CORNER

Jan. 23-Apr. 1

Session 3

Tuition & Demo Fee Now Due

Jan. 23 ~ 7:15

Nutcracker Wrap Up Meeting-
Committee Chairpeople

Week of Feb 6

La Fille Mal Gardee rehearsals
begin ~ schedule to be posted

Feb. 19-23

Mid Winter Break: No Classes

Mar. 3

Deadline to notify us if your child will
not participate in Dance Demo

DANCE DEMO FEE

Our end of year Dance Demonstrations are a highlight of our program and provide our dancers with an opportunity to show off their talents. This year our dance demonstrations will take place on June 4 and June 11. Enclosed you will find a schedule of all the classes and the day and time of their performance. Rehearsal is held on the Saturday before the performance. A detailed schedule with rehearsal times will be sent next month. Every dancer receives a beautifully designed, hand-made costume. Creating over four hundred costumes is a huge undertaking, and it is important that you inform us early if your child is unable to participate. The demonstration fee of \$85 is billed on the enclosed session 3 invoice. Each student receives two tickets to the show. Additional tickets will be on sale in the office in May. If you have any questions, call 454-5759

We Need Your Help!

Our annual Direct Appeal campaign was kicked off with a direct mailing in November. Many thanks to those of you that responded and pledged your support of our school by making a donation.

We are well short of our goal of \$50,000, and are asking you to please help us by making a donation. All amounts are encouraged; no donation is too small! There are different tiers of recognition, based on the amount you donate. Each tier offers unique benefits, such as tickets to shows and priority seating. All donations are tax deductible. You can even pay with a credit card! Please pick up a donor envelope from the studio lobby; or call and we'll drop one in the mail to you.

DanceReach News

An annotated version of our *Peter and the Wolf* production will be performed for residents of the The Redwoods Retirement home in Mill Valley on Sunday, Feb. 5th. We are very excited about bringing this fabulously entertaining show to this very special group of people.

Adult Programs: A great way to start the new year

It's a new year and time to follow up on that resolution! Our adult programs offer a convenient way for you to regularly take an hour or two to regenerate and become more fit and flexible at the same time. Choose from Ballet, Pilates, or Jazzercise classes.

Deborah Russo's Jazzercise class schedule has expanded. We have seven Jazzercise classes per week to choose from!

Our own Jamaica Janowicz is a certified Pilates instructor and now offers two weekly classes. The benefits of

Pilates include strengthening, toning and flexibility.

Charles Torres teaches our Intermediate Ballet/Floor Barre class, and Janelle Baumsteiger teaches a Beginning Ballet class. Stapleton adult class cards are good for Pilates and Ballet; and Jazzercise offers a number of flexible and very reasonable payment options, including monthly passes. Please feel free to drop in to observe or participate! We are always looking for suggestions for new adult programs, so if you any ideas, give us a call! 454-5759.

<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>
7-8 am Jazzercise	7-8 am Jazzercise	7-8 am Jazzercise	7-8 am Jazzercise	7-8 am Jazzercise
12:45-2:00 Floor Barre/ Int Ballet	8:45-9:45 am Jazzercise		8:45-9:45 am Jazzercise	
	10-11am Pilates		10-11:30 am Beg. Ballet	
			10-11 am Pilates	

Spring Production: *La Fille Mal Gardée*

Just as faculty and dancers are catching their breath from the fabulous Nutcracker production, preparations are underway for our annual spring concert. This year, we are mounting an exciting production of one of the classical comic ballets: *La Fille Mal Gardée*. *La Fille Mal Gardée* (translation: the badly-guarded daughter) is one of the earliest full-length ballets, dating back to the late 18th century. It is a light, romantic story of two young lovers: Lisa and Colas. They outsmart Lisa's domineering mother, Madame Simone, who wants her to marry Alain, the idiot son of a wealthy farmer. Set in a small provincial French village, most of the action takes place in the farmhouse, the barnyard and the countryside. This rustic and charming ballet features bright, happy dancing and lots of humor. We are pleased to announce that

etc.

Lost and Found: Massive amounts of items have been "lost" at the Studio. All of the items are on tables near the office. Please check for belongings. **After Jan. 27 all unclaimed items will go to Goodwill.**

Sweatshirts: There are a limited number of Stapleton sweatshirts for sale. Please check with the office if you are interested.

Nutcracker Raffle winner: Thanks to Angeline Greenblat for helping us to identify the lucky winner of the handmade doll. Her name is Josie Bartlett and the doll is on its way to her! Thanks to everyone who sold or purchased tickets.

our own Charles Torres will perform the role of Alain; and Spencer Lewis, on the heels of his fabulous debut as our Nutcracker Prince, returns to dance the role of Colas. This light-hearted, charming ballet offers wonderful entertainment for the entire family.

Performances will take place on Saturday May 6 at 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. at the Marin Center Showcase Theater. Mark your calendar today!

Current students will receive a coupon for a \$3 discount when a child ticket is purchased with an adult ticket. Please support our school by attending this wonderful Stapleton Youth Company Ballet production. Tickets are available from the Marin Center box office at 499-6800. Coupons will be sent with next month's Pas de Chat.

SSPA WISH LIST

- A small microwaveoven
- A photocopying machine

If you know a business that is upgrading their machine and may be willing to donate their old, functional one, please let us know.

Nutcracker Memories

The Videos/DVDs from the first round of orders are available in the studio for pickup. If you haven't picked yours up yet, please be sure to check the box on the desk in the studio lobby. If you missed the first video/dvd order, it's not too late! There will be one final video order. The deadline to submit an order is Friday, January 27. Forms are available in the studio lobby. Nutcracker photo portraits, taken by Abby Tarsches, are still available for order for a very limited time. Please visit the website: www.atarschesphoto.com and click on "special events".

Sizzling summer program dates announced

We're very excited about our programs for Summer 2006. We are planning a full workshop which will culminate in a performance for Ballet 2-6 and Advanced 1-2-3 students. Mark your calendar: the workshop dates are July 5 to 29, and there will be two Saturdays included. Students will be treated to a variety of talented guest instructors, and in addition to ballet intensive we are looking forward to including classes such as Musical Theater, Jazz, Acting and Theatrical Combat, Modern, Hip Hop, and Costume Construction. The workshop will culminate in a performance; the venue and date are to be determined.

Last year's Pre Ballet Camps for younger children (4/5 years and 6/7 years) were extremely popular, and will return for three one-week sessions: June 26-30, July 31-Aug. 4, and Aug. 7-11. This creative and enriching summer program meets in the morning and includes ballet, arts & crafts, snacks and fun. Additional information will be available at the end of February. In the meantime, you can begin planning your vacation around these fabulous summer programs!

Toddler Fun!

Is the rainy weather keeping you and your toddler indoors? Magical Movement for Parent & Toddler is the perfect solution to winter cabin fever. Toddlers ages 18 to 35 months and their parent can socialize with others as they participate in a wide variety of stimulating and engaging activities, using music, movement, stories, and other activities. This innovative program was awarded a grant from the Marin First 5 commission. Meets Wednesday mornings at 10:30. Call 454-5759 for more info.

It's a wrap!

NUTCRACKER WRAP MEETING

All the committee chair people from this year's Nutcracker are asked to join us at the wrap meeting on Mon. Jan. 23 at 7:15 p.m. at the studio. This annual meeting gives us the chance to discuss the production and "debrief". We will discuss what worked well, what could use some tweaking, and any input that we received from the volunteer team. If you have feedback or an idea that you'd like to share, please call the chair of the committee that you served on; or contact Sharon at the studio: 454-5759 / sharon@stapletonschool.org. Your feedback is extremely important, so don't hesitate to let us know what you think and to give us your suggestions.

SWEDISH MASSAGE

Megan Cherry, instructor at Stapleton, has just begun her massage therapy practice. She's offering a special of \$30 for a one hour Swedish massage for first time clients. Call or e-mail her to make an appointment. Gift certificates also available. Cell# 415-497-8414 or meganmcherry@hotmail.com