

Dear Dance Kids Parents and Dancers,

After fifteen successful years of Nutcracker, I thought a walk down memory lane would be an interesting topic. In 1993, I realized productions could not grow without a non-profit entity to drive an organization. Setting about without real knowledge of where the end was or how I was to get there....Dance Kids was born.

Until 1995, Nutcracker had been performed at the Carmel Ballet Academy. Yes, on the very stage where Choreographer's Night takes place, was the full length Nut! With Dance Kids created, a board of directors in place (Sarah Felsing being an early presidential leader) the move to Sunset Center took place. As I look back, a shaky beginning, yet a dream full of hope for the future of traditional ballet in Carmel was begun.

During and after the renovation of Sunset Center, we were welcomed to Monterey Peninsula College and found our home for some years. Once the dust had settled after the renovation, we found the operational fees excessive for our Nutcracker budget. There were contentious words and letters over that period between the former executive director of Sunset Center, Jack Globenfelt and members of the Dance Kids families. Our families believed we belonged at Sunset and the reality of cost kept us away.

Artistically, Dance Kids grew as a dance and theatrical production company, producing at the height of productivity, three productions and a month long theatre musical camp directed by Gloria Elber. Our team grew and changed. Tia Brown took over the artistic director tiara a year ago. Wonderful choreographers touched many children's lives over the musical and dance years of the organization, many memories of songs and lyrics, costumes and sets, laughs and serious moments and most of all, touching the lives of so many.

The years have pared some of the treasured productions due to financial constraints and now we face another major cut in funding. Regardless of the outcome, I am so grateful to parents, families, choreographers, teachers and most of all the young people that I have had the joy to know.

The future of Dance Kids of Monterey County is in the hands of parents, the community and the board of directors. It has a unique imprint of the arts; ballet. Ballet is second only to opera as the most expensive art to produce. Money is not unique, just scarce for the arts these days.

Please help if you can!

Dancingly,

Carol