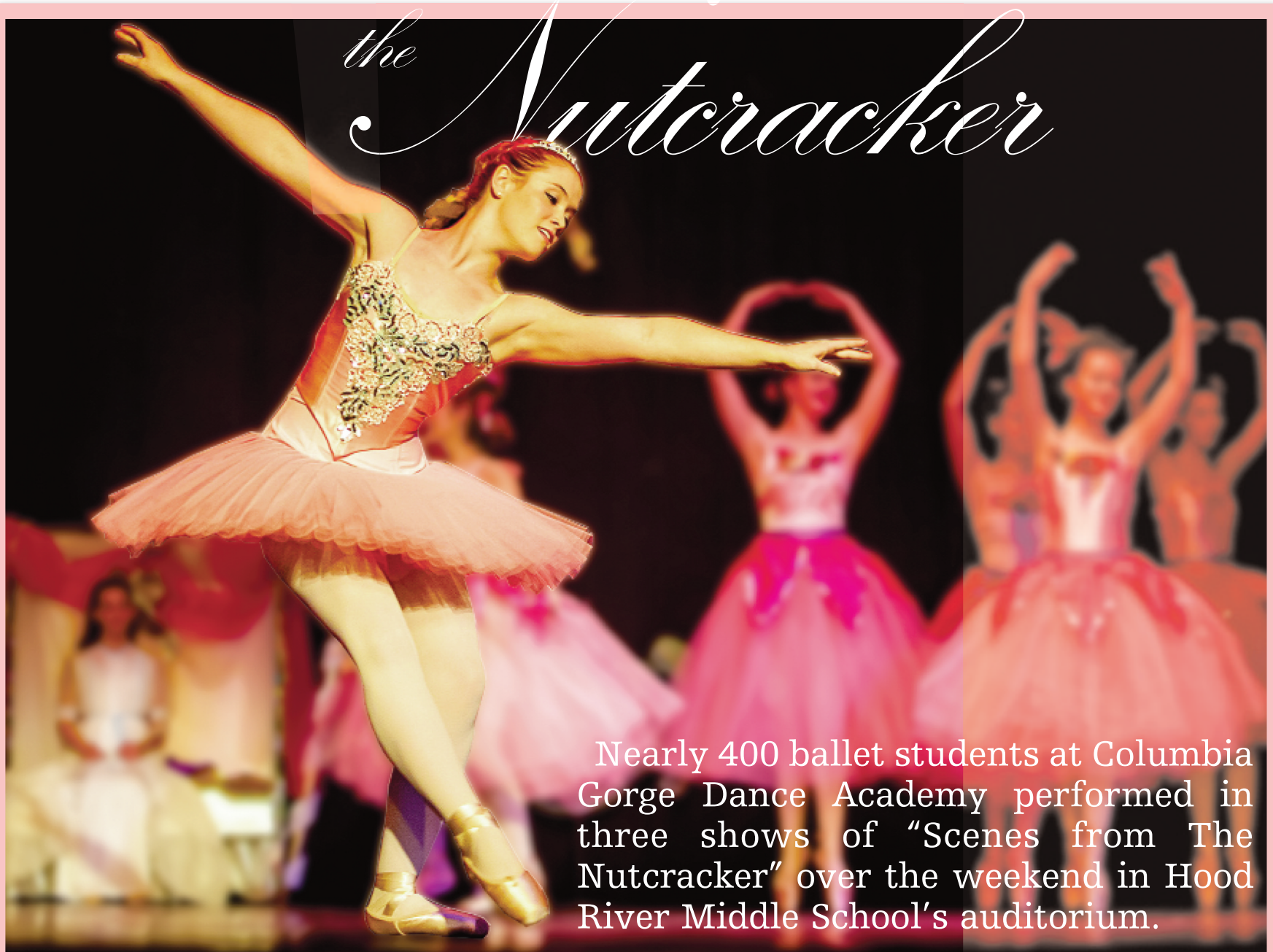




15  
years  
of



Nearly 400 ballet students at Columbia Gorge Dance Academy performed in three shows of "Scenes from The Nutcracker" over the weekend in Hood River Middle School's auditorium.

Story and photos by  
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Photos by DAVID  
MACKINTOSH

This was the 15th annual benefit performance of "Scenes from The Nutcracker" for FISH and Providence Hospice of the Gorge.

Nancy Clement, ballet director at Columbia Gorge Dance Academy, said in her message to the audience, "What a wonderful way to share our love of dance and to support FISH and Providence Hospice of the Gorge!"

This year, as usual, all three performances played to full houses, and whereas past shows have pulled in \$2,500 or so, "this year it was \$3,500!" Clement said. And that's not counting the tons of food donated. "I'm very happy," she added.

"Scenes from the Nutcracker"

began when Clement's students danced at the local senior centers: Down Manor, Parkhurst House and Hood River Care Center. Community interest began to grow, as did the number of dancers, and so the production was moved to the stage and opened to the public as an annual fundraiser.

Megan Hobbs and Mikayla Kiyokawa, seniors at Hood River Valley High School, and Dominique See, a senior at White Salmon, shared the lead roles of the Sugar Plum Fairy. See, Sierra Johnson and Taniya Roberts all danced as the beautiful Snow Queen.

The coveted role of Clara was shared by Ashley Hendricks, Madi Wofford and Fiona McLaughlin; Luke Southall, Josephine Stenn and Caroline Hyde shared the role of Fritz,

Clara's naughty brother.

The Mechanical Dolls this year were Megan Hobbs, Megumi Hosaka and Anneke Virk, and the Dancing Bears were Olivia Acosta, Elizabeth Bricker and Rory Krehbiel.

Clement dedicated this year's shows to "Nutcracker friendships," inspired by her friendship with Ann Morgan Strasser, with whom she danced The Nutcracker at Ballet West in Utah.

"We have a very special friendship that that began with ballet," she told the

audience. "One of the things I love seeing are the friendships that begin here in our dance studio."

"Play dates are set up after ballet with the little ones; students request to be in class with their friends from across the river, and some very special and long-lasting ties have developed among the advanced girls — after all, some have been dancing together since they were Baby Mice! "So here's to celebrating the special friendships of Nutcracker," Clement said.



MIKAYLA  
KIYOKAWA  
(right) as one of  
the Sugar Plum  
Fairies.

WALTZ OF THE FLOWERS (top photos): Part of Sunday's Corps de Ballet; Claire Rawson as one of the Dew Drop Fairies.



SCENES  
OF GRACE

(clockwise from upper left): Casey Holzman (left) and Sarah Scarborough in the Arabian scene; Petite Angels; Anna Lee Ryan (with parasol) leads the Chinese Dancers; Fiona McLaughlin as Clara, with Petite Snowflakes; Russian Dancers.

Top, bottom left photos by Esther K. Smith; all others by David Mackintosh

