

Holiday dance recital wows audience

By **Jodi Schneider McNamee**
Correspondent

Santa's making a list. And he's checking it twice. He's gonna find out who's naughty or nice.

Sisters Dance Academy's Winter Dance Recital brought "Naughty or Nice" to a new level at Sisters High School auditorium on Saturday.

"Our show this year is themed Naughty or Nice, and the dancers are either going to be on Santa's naughty list or nice list, and your job as an audience — especially the kids — is to help me figure out which of our dancers is going to be on the nice list or the naughty list," announced Lonnie Liddell, owner and dance instructor at Sisters Dance Academy. "I want to give thanks to so many people

who helped with our recital, and our light and sound director, Ross Grant, is also a crucial part of the whole show; he put in a lot of hours in preparing for the performances, and this is his senior year at SHS."

The first act definitely got on Santa's "nice list." The junior ensemble performed ballet to "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

It is a Christmas carol that originated from the 1863 poem "Christmas Bells" by American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The song tells of the narrator's despair, upon hearing Christmas bells, that "hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men." But, the carol concludes with the bells carrying renewed hope for peace among men.

Choreographed by Sharri Bertagna, "Naughty Naughty Children (Better Start Actin' Nice)," by Grace Potter, showed both naughty and nice in a tap-dance extravaganza.

"The Nutcracker" is the Christmas ballet that everyone knows and loves, and there probably isn't a dance ensemble that hasn't brought a few of the musical pieces to life during a holiday show. "The Candy Cane Dance" is one of the most athletic in the entire ballet of "The Nutcracker," and the 10 Sisters ballet dancers brought down the house with their performance.

The audience was charmed by 12 lil' jammers performing a hip-hop version of "Jingle Bell Rock," a popular Christmas song first released by Bobby Helms in 1957, following Liddell's



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Costuming was exquisite at Saturday's dance recital.

bigger-than-life cues as they performed.

During intermission families, friends, and Sisters folks enjoyed a bake sale of holiday cookies that volunteer Ann Alisa Duerden organized for the dance recital.

The ghost of Christmas

past is the first of three spirits that haunt Ebenezer Scrooge in the Charles Dickens novel "A Christmas Carol." And a special highlight titled "Ghosts of Christmas Past" revealed a haunting performance by nine dancers made up to look like ghosts. The costumes and makeup were outstanding.

Everyone loves a tap dance, and with 3- to 5-year-old tap-dancers, you couldn't go wrong with "Do You Want to Build a Snowman?" from the popular animated Disney movie "Frozen." The audience couldn't have smiled more when seven little dancers with fancy top hats and tutus tapped across stage to a medley of songs about a snowman.

The audience cheered and laughed during the performance of "Kidnap the Sandy Claws" from the movie "The Nightmare before Christmas," although the jazz dancers ended up on Santa's "naughty list."



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Young ballerinas took to the stage at Sisters High School auditorium.



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