

Vernonia Ballet's *Wizard of Oz* was Wonderful!

The Vernonia Ballet have outdone themselves this time!

All the years of hard work, practice, and dedication really showed when Jessica Davis led her local dance troupe through their production of the *Wizard of Oz*, this year's Spring Recital on the Washington Grade School stage on June 1st,

So, where to start? The costumes and make up were magnificent, especially the clever and creative designs for the Tin Man, Scarecrow, and Cowardly Lion, as well as for the dancers who portrayed the Tornado, the Rainbow, and the Yellow Brick Road.

The set designs were colorful and creative, yet subtle, adding just enough flavor to the atmosphere on stage and helping remind the audience that they weren't in Kansas anymore.



The music was amazing, with adaptations of classic Oz songs we all know and love, as well as new music that was really a great addition to the show. The music that introduced the Wicked Witch was especially scary, and the music that accompanied the Tornado Dance was also well chosen.

And finally we get to the dancers themselves. Davis has a core group of dancers she has been training now for quite some time—some of the girls for almost a decade, and it is really starting to show in their performance on stage. Jessica Gardner as Dorothy, Laura Rice as Glenda the Good Witch and the Wizard, Sarah Wagner as the Lion, Nicole Glass as the Scarecrow, Lauren Glass as the Tin Man and Megan Rice as the Yellow Brick Road all had a chance to shine individually and together. All these young ladies took several other roles in ensemble pieces as well, including the Tornado Dance and all their hours of practice were extremely evident. They have all really grown as performers and dancers and did an amazing job of bringing this show to life.

And of course the Oz story wouldn't be complete without a Wicked Witch—Davis danced this role herself complete with striped socks and broom.

The younger dancers in the troupe also had a chance to perform. Highlights included the Poppies, the Rainbows, the Munchkin Girls, the Lollipop Guild and Lullaby League, the Trees, the Snowflakes, Toto and of course those naughty Flying Monkeys.

The show was sponsored in part by a \$250 donation from Vernonia Hands-On Art which helped provide the extra props and costumes.

This production really showed the level of commitment Davis and her dancers are showing to bringing quality performances to Vernonia. It was a fun and enjoyable show and hopefully we can look forward to more of the same during their next season of productions.

Where Do You Read the Voice?



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