

KeizerCommunity

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McNary senior leads *The Snowman's Dance*

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

It's not Christmas at City Dance Theatre until the studio's annual performances of *The Snowman's Dance*.

"As much as Nutcracker is a tradition in the ballet world, this has become a tradition for our families," director Zoe-Lisa Banton said. "My kids know nothing happens in my house until after Snowman's over and then we do the tree and everyone's ready."

McNary senior Sydney Martindale, who has been in the show all 10 years, agrees.

"We always get our Christmas tree the day after Snowman," she said. "It gets us ready."

The 11th annual performances will take place Saturday, Dec. 3 at noon and 3 p.m. in McNary High School's Ken Collins Theater.

Tickets are available for \$10 in advance at the studio or the door but the 3 p.m. show is nearly sold out.

Martindale started at City Dance Theater in the first grade, was a snow bunny in the inaugural performance of *The Snowman's Dance* and has worked her way up to playing the lead Snowman.

When she's not a snowman, Martindale has spent the past two summers working at Enchanted Forest as a princess and volunteering at Clear Lake Elementary.

She's also been in two musicals with the McNary drama department—*Legally Blonde* and *Beauty and the Beast*.

The Snowman's Dance features 165 kids, ages 2-18, from all over Salem-Keizer playing everything from tapping reindeer to hip hopping Santas to little baby snowflakes.

"I always say it's a magic journey of friendship of a snowman and a little girl and they get to explore each other's worlds and all the different characters come to life," Banton said. "We have people that see it ever year and cry. It's a fun holiday message of friendship and magic and imagination."

The show is loosely based on the children's picture book by Raymond Briggs, turned animated television special—*The Snowman*.

"It's kind of a dream for me because when I was 15 and starting to get into teaching and was training as a dancer, this was when *The Snowman* was huge in England where I grew up," Banton said. "The music was so inspiring to me as a dancer at that time and I kept saying to my mom and dad one day I'm going to make this into a show. Eleven years ago



McNary senior Sydney Martindale, left, playing *The Snowman*, enjoys a rehearsal of *The Snowman's Dance* at City Dance Theatre with Delaney Rothmeyer, who plays the Little Girl. The show is Saturday, Dec. 3 at noon and 3 p.m. at McNary High School.

it was the right group of kids."

Banton's *The Snowman's Dance* has music from *The Snowman* but also *Harry Potter* and *The Firm*. Ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, lyrical and contemporary dance are all represented.

"We cover everything that we teach," Banton said. "Those classes are all represented."

While the story remains the same, characters change every year.

"This year we are bringing in wooden soldiers," Banton

said. "It's kind of a Rockette number with some of my older kids and we've never done that before. Last year we brought in an owl to our forest scene. We add different things each year to jazz it up."

The show lasts about an

hour and 15 minutes.

"We just kind of hit them in the face with everything and they walk out crying and ready for Christmas," Banton said. "My in-laws are Jewish and they come every year and love it."

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Santa Claus to fly into town

The Salem-Keizer Volcanoes will play host to this season's biggest star when Santa Claus flies into Volcanoes Stadium at noon on Saturday, Dec. 3.

Keizer kids are invited to come to the stadium early to get a good place in line to get in to talk to Santa and tell him what they want for Christmas.

St. Nick will be at the stadium to 3 p.m. or until the last good little boy or girl has seen him and gotten a candy cane.

Free photographs will be available of Keizer kids on Santa's lap.



Santa Claus will be at Salem-Keizer Volcanoes Stadium Saturday, Dec. 3 from noon to 3 p.m.

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