



COLIN MURPHEY PHOTO

Students at the Encore Dance Studio pose for a photo between rehearsals.

STAGE PRESENTS

Admission to Encore Dance Studio's Dec. 15 Toy Drive is unopened gifts for Toys for Tots

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**
FOR COAST WEEKEND

Encore Dance Studio's annual Toy Drive and Holiday Showcase, taking place in Seaside on Friday, Dec. 15, is lovable for numerous reasons.

Not only does it merge the magic of the holiday season with the enchantment of dance, but, at its heart, the recital is about "kids helping kids," Assistant Director Tia Van Slyke said.

The talent of about 200 dancers, 2-year-

olds to teens, will be on display as they perform an hour-long production of holiday-themed dance routines at the Seaside Civic & Convention Center. In lieu of admission, the studio requests attendees bring new unopened toys, which will be donated to the local Toys for Tots chapter to distribute to children and families in Clatsop County.

"It gets everyone in the mood for the holiday season a couple weeks ahead of time," said Van Slyke, who joined the studio in 2005. "The kids really feel good about the literal mountain of toys they see

when they walk in, right before they go on stage. They have a buzz of excitement about it ... It's enjoyable for everyone, it's a great outcome for the charity."

The recital will showcase an array of genres, including ballet, jazz, lyrical, hip hop, musical theater and tap. Even the instructors will jump onstage for a number, and one group will perform a cheerleading/hip hop mash-up they did during the pre-game show for a Portland Trail Blazers game in November. Only the tumblers will not perform at the recital.

IF YOU GO

WHAT: Encore Dance Studio's Toy Drive and Holiday Showcase

WHEN: 6:30 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 15. Doors 6 p.m.

WHERE: Seaside Civic & Convention Center (415 First Ave., Seaside, Ore. 97138)