

# The stage is calling at Kay's Academy of Dance

From novice to advanced, jazz hands of all abilities are invited to enroll in Kay's upcoming 2024-2025 season. Registration is now open for the season, after which the troupe will build a program for its annual recital in June, and a variety of traveling performances. Along the way enrollees focus on technique and artistry to advance each dancer's skillset, with a strong attention to building self-confi-

dence and the personal growth that comes from setting goals, making the commitment, and the achievement that follows. A sense of belonging at Kay's Academy of Dance is what sets it apart, according to Molly Adams, a current instructor who began pirouetting at Kay's as a toddler herself. "One thing that has never waivered is the presence of family and integrity in every-

thing we do. All of the teachers have consistently provided a safe and kind atmosphere where kids know they will be treated with respect," Adams said. It's no wonder Kay's has cultivated generations of talent over 30 years, with a values-based approach that develops the dancer mentally to challenge oneself, learn how to collaborate, and explore the creativity within.

Dance parent Terry Buchmann's daughter has been a passionate student with Kay's for eight years. Buchmann said what sets this studio apart is that they "offer the same high-quality classes, without the pressure that is placed on kids these days. They meet children at their level and work with them to move forward to the next." While other studios cen-

ter their mission on intensely competitive dance teams, Kay's Academy of Dance focuses instead on Dancers in Motion (DIM) and Kids in Motion (KIM), the traveling performance troupes made up of elite students in the ballet, jazz, tap, and hip-hop disciplines. While DIM and KIM require an exceptional amount of personal drive, winning over losing is never the objective. Kay's seeks to develop the dancer as an individual, maintaining joy for the artform and the exhilaration of the stage.

Previous memorable performances include the Sugar, Gator and Orange bowls, and the Parade of Dreams at Disney World, among other illustrious venues with high visibility. Summerfest, State Fair and Great America welcome Dancers in Motion annually, and family and friends can witness every student's progress with a tremendous finale recital.

A Kay's dancer can expect to foster lifelong friendships, a team of advocates among the instructors, and modern amenities in the academy's upgraded studio, according to representatives.

Overlooking picturesque Phantom Lake, Kay's new

location features convenient pick-up and drop-off, observation windows for proud parents, and a studio space boasting vaulted ceilings and the same high-grade flooring as employed by the Milwaukee Ballet Company.

Many classes take dancers off the beaten path to sharpen their poise and flex new muscles, such as Ballet Funk, Poms and Tricks, Lyrical, and more. The range of enrichment opportunities belies something deeper in the academy's aims as a studio.

"We chose Kay's because of the variety of classes, but honestly what sold us was Miss Kay herself," Buchmann said.

The atmosphere of unyielding support is echoed by fellow dance mom, Jessica Sullivan.

"We love the family feel. The staff all know who your child is and truly makes you feel welcome. My daughter has gained so much confidence in herself as a person since starting at Kay's," Sullivan said.

Enroll now for the current season by visiting the registration portal at KaysAcademyofDance.com, or Pas de Bourre on over to the studio for more information.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS Southern Lakes Newspapers

Students honored for turning in their summer reading calendars in the East Troy School District include: from Little Prairie Elementary (above) Gavin Enger, Dominick Knudson, Vanessa Knudson, Auggie Borre, Henry Johannes, Gunner Braeger, Harvey Kothrade and (below, left) Avery Wolter; and Prairie View Elementary - (below, right) Maddyx Pfankuch, Kaitlyn Enger, Gabriella Knudson and Frederick Skotartzak.

## Meet the latest reading calendar kids

East Troy School District students who turned in their summer reading calendars - displaying that they read and/or participated in optional summer literacy activities for hundreds of minutes this summer - were recently celebrated.

"We are so proud of these young readers' dedication and enthusiasm for learning," educators said in a press release.

For those who aren't aware, reading 20-plus minutes at home (outside of school) exposes students

to hearing/reading 1.8 million more words per year, compared to students who do not hear stories/read at home.

"The research that supports children being read to and/or reading to themselves every day makes an astounding difference in their educational success," they said. "It is never too late to begin reading with your children at home - even babies benefit! As soon as babies can hear (even while in the womb), we should read to them."

Need books? If so, check the

"Little Free Libraries" located throughout East Troy, and/or visit the local library. And remember, signing up for a library card to check out books is also free!

Those who have questions about growing their own reading abilities or habits, or who may know of an adult who would like to learn to read can contact Cari McBurney, East Troy Community School District's Literacy Specialist at mbcbar@eastroy.k12.wi.us or 262-642-6730, ext. 2231.



## Society's Assets launches annual youth art contest

Society's Assets is sponsoring its 24th annual youth art contest and has encouraged students from multiple counties to participate in the competition.

The competition, which is open to students from kindergarten through high school, is available to children attending schools in Racine, Kenosha, Walworth, Rock and Jefferson counties.

Schools in the area will receive contest information packets, according to a news release, adding parents or students should contact Society's Assets for entry blank. Entry blanks are also

available on the agency website at societysassets.org.

In 2023, the contest theme is "Ability...not Disability."

Prizes are awarded to winners in each of the four grade categories and entries must be received at a Society's Assets office by 4:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 3.

Office locations are: 5200 Washington Ave., Suite 225, Racine; 5455 Sheridan Road, Suite 101, Kenosha; and 615 E. Geneva St., Elkhorn.

Judging takes place in November and winning entries in each category will be permanently displayed in the main office in Racine.

"Our contest last year brought in over 600 entries from schools throughout our servicer area," said Adrienne Stiger, member of the Community Relations Committee of the Board of Directors, which oversees the contest.

"The quality and variety of the artwork impressed the judges. The Committee believes this project creates disability awareness and acceptance and promotes positive action. It also shares our mission with young people in the community," Stiger added.

For more information on the contest, contact Society's

Assets at 262-637-9128.

Society's Assets serves as a resource for people with disabilities.

Services include advocacy, supportive home care/personal care, home/vehicle modifications, a loan closet with equipment and technology for a "Try Before You Buy" experience partially supported by WisTech, technical assistance regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act, independent living skills training, peer support, benefits counseling, and transitions to life after high school or returning home from the nursing home.

## Obituary

NANCY ANN O'CONNELL

Nancy Ann (nee Wielgosz) O'Connell, 79, of East Troy, passed away suddenly on Monday, Sept. 18, 2023.

Nancy was the beloved wife of the late William E. O'Connell and the cherished mother of Kevin (Karla) O'Connell, William (Rebecca) O'Connell, Jennifer (Brian) Bergersen and Timothy (Mattea) O'Connell. She is further survived by her loving mother, Virginia Wielgosz, age 104. She was the beloved sister to Matthew (Bonnie) Wielgosz and Teri (Ronald) Meeusen; devoted grandma to Nathan and Lukas O'Connell, Benjamin (Meredith), William, Joseph, and Brian Bergersen, Irelynn, Jameson O'Connell and Anthony McClain Peters; and the great grandma of Bennett Bergersen. She was preceded in death by her husband William; son-in-law Brian Bergersen; father Matthew Wielgosz; father-in-law, Eugene O'Connell; mother-in-law, Frances O'Connell, and sister-in-law Jeanne O'Connell. She is further survived by her brother-in-law Robert O'Connell, many cherished nieces, nephews, other relatives, friends and colleagues.

Nancy, a committed Chil-



dren's Librarian for 38 years at the East Troy Lions Public Library and avid reader, continued working while fighting health issues. A member of St. Peter's Catholic Church, she is best remembered for her kindness, compassion and the loving gift of connection with everyone she encountered, and her fierce love of family and sport. She was a special, beautiful, and caring soul with many talents, embodying strength in family and community. Our rock, our teacher, our heart, Mom you will be missed dearly.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Friday, Sept. 29, 2023 at St Peter's the Apostle Catholic Church in East Troy at 6:30 p.m. with a time of gathering from 5 p.m. until the time of Mass.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to the East Troy Lions Public Library.

Legacy Funeral Services of East Troy has the honor of serving the family. Well-wishers may visit www.Legacyfuneralservices.com.

## Mukwonago Times

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