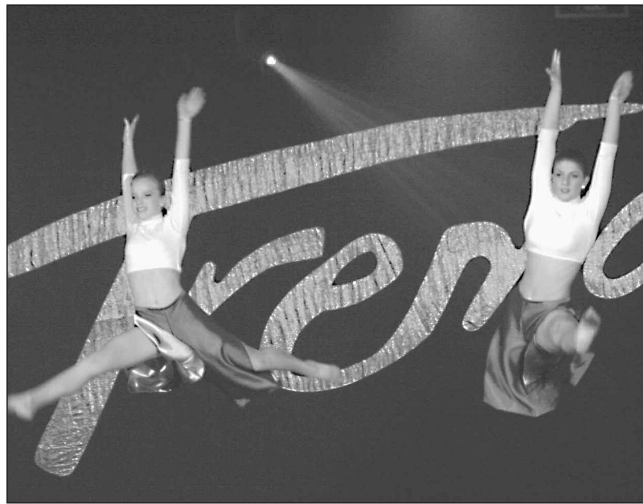


It's all gold for local dancers at Detroit Dance Competition

It's all gold medals, that is, as well as two silvers and one platinum! The Essex County Dancers Competition Team earned these medals when they entered 15 dance numbers at the West Coast Regional Dance Competition in Detroit, Michigan just over two weeks ago.

Competing against over 20 teams from Michigan, the team proved once again that Windsor and Essex County can be proud of the talent found close to home. The 28 young dancers, ranging in age from 9 to 17, work closely together for 11 months of the year. Each will work three to four nights each week to perfect their dancing skills and to gain the precision needed to ensure each dance will shine in competition.



Jillian Teskey of Essex and Kristie Moy of Tecumseh leap across the stage at the 2007 Tremaine Dance Competition in Dearborn, Michigan. The number, called Blind Winter, also includes Kristi Thompson of Tecumseh and Brianne Nouvion of Belle River.

again and again, and then again," explains the team's artistic director, Cindy Pattison-Rivard from Nancy Pattison's Dance World.

"I fall asleep with the music running through my

head but the kids never seem to get tired of it. And that's because they love to dance!"

Essex County Dancers, also known as ECDI, is a non-profit organization. In

SOUL SINGERS



RoseAnne Palazzolo, Jim Walls and Tim Byrne belt out a tune during a concert performed by the Music Express Show Band at Holy Name of Jesus Church Sunday. The band, comprised of a dozen singers and a 30-piece orchestra, played an energized set of upbeat, contemporary gospel music to a packed crowd. Donations and ticket sales from the event helped pay for a new \$7,000 Clavinova keyboard for the church.

Photo: Daniel Schwab

addition to helping young people learn the art of dance, ECDI encourages discipline and teamwork in its members. And that teamwork includes giving back to the community. In October, several team members banded together to walk for cancer in CIBC's Run for the Cure. The team also dances at charity events and anyone attending the "We Care for Kids Gala" on April 27th will have an

opportunity to enjoy their performance.

Perhaps the benefit of belonging to a team like ECDI is best summed up by the dancers themselves. Kristie Moy, 17, is in her final year on the team after a total of 10 years. She recently received a scholarship to attend Wayne State University where she will study both Science and Dance.

"I hope to continue on in

medicine or sport therapy when I graduate. Being a member of ECDI has made this all possible for me and I encourage anyone who loves to dance to try out for the team. You'll never know where it can take you!"

Everyone is welcome to try out for the Competition Team and can do so by contacting Nancy Pattison's Dance World at 519-966-2259.

A GARDEN OF POSSIBILITIES



EDHS English teacher Aaron McKinley kneels in the future spot of a vegetable garden that will be planted by students. The school's manufacturing class recently constructed a "seed starting shelf" where root crops such as potatoes, tomatoes and peppers will be grown before being transplanted into the garden in June. "The focus is getting kids connected with growing food," McKinley said. The growing project is currently seeking volunteers or donations of seedlings, straw, mulch or equipment. Contact McKinley at EDHS: 519-776-7344.

Photo: Daniel Schwab

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