



LAKE ERIE BALLET

701 Holland St.
Erie, PA 16501
814-871-4356

Alethea Bodine
Executive Director

Kirsten Carpenter
School Director

Christina Maria Adelhardt
Artistic Advisor

Tauna Hunter
Artistic Advisor

Board of Directors

Ray Schreckengost
Chairman

Donald R. Yusz
Deputy Chair

Leah F. Manino
Secretary

Donna L. Carlino
Treasurer

James T. Domino
Asst. Sec./Treas.

Dnald Crenshaw
Jeffrey Johnson
Kathryn Travis
Carolyn Vendetti
Lori Yusz

www.lakeerieballet.org

When people think of dancers, what do they think of immediately? Be honest. Do they think of people like Fred Astaire or Cyd Charisse? Do they think of those popular TV shows like, "Dancing with the Stars" or "So You Think You Can Dance"? Or do they think of people like President Obama's Chief of Staff, Rahm Emanuel? What do you consider a dancer to be?

Any one who's ever taken a dance class can tell you, dance is a discipline. It's a discipline that attempts to harmoniously marry the mind with the body. When an individual masters this connection, there is literally nothing that can stop them from doing what they set out to do. Since becoming the new Executive Director of this 61 year old organization last July, I've discovered that the time that people spend in the LEB studios is monumentally important in shaping the type of person they become. This has been proven in the numerous conversations I've had with LEB alumni that have gone on to study medicine, science and the law. Each has excelled in their chosen fields to become leading professionals in their trade. Let's face it - regardless of profession the competition is fierce, no matter which direction you're headed in.

The one thing I've found LEB alumni have in common is their ability to "dance" through their lives. When obstacles arise in their path, they observe, adapt and overcome. They've all figured out a way to create their own paths through self knowledge, sheer ingenuity and probably most importantly - integrity. There is no denying the rigorous process dancers put them selves through quickens the mind, body and inevitably, one's resolve. I am extremely proud to continue to secure that legacy at Lake Erie Ballet.

These days have been exceptionally difficult for many arts organizations. In the past few months we've seen incredible ups and downs with funding for the Arts in the House and Senate. On Tuesday, 7/14 the Pennsylvania House of Representative Republicans plan to put SB 850, which eliminates the Pennsylvania Council of the Arts, back up for vote in the House Appropriations Committee. This bill holds dire consequences for the future of the arts in Pennsylvania. I've found myself writing letters to legislators and asking local officials to support the arts. For the most part, I feel I have been somewhat effectual. But in reality, it is not up to me or just a few people at the top. The presence of organizations like the Lake Erie Ballet in communities like Erie is really up to you. Every single person who cares even the slightest about art must act, act now and continue to act in order to secure its presence.

The first thing you can do is be vocal about your convictions. Be an advocate for art in your community. Write or call your local and state officials about supporting the arts where ever and when ever they can. Secondly, you can give to the arts. Volunteer your time or talent - it is relatively easy and possibly one of the greatest gifts you could give. Lastly you can make a contribution to your favorite local arts organizations. Believe me, there is no contribution too small. I encourage you to examine the role that art plays in your life and the lives of those around you and then act on it. I trust with the help and support of people like yourself, the Lake Erie Ballet will be able to continue to offer its on going legacy of providing others with the gift of "dancing though their days". With your continued help and support I look forward to a very successful 2009-2010 season and eagerly look forward to securing LEB's legacy for another 60 years.

Yours in Dance,
Alethea Bodine
7 / 12 / 09