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BUSINESS

New drama club lets kids hone their acting skills.

By Elyse Reel

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Through Curtis Elementary's winter program, Barbara Plunkett has produced and directed several well-loved plays.

The preliminary reviews are in, and the verdict is unanimous: Barbara Plunkett's Drama Club, Inc. is sure to be a success.

"She's incredible!" raves Georgia Faison, whose son, Alex, appeared in Plunkett's summer 2007 performance of *Beauty and the Beast*. "Mrs. Plunkett took a group of elementary school children and in 20 days, gave them the confidence and skills to wow the crowd."

Ruth C. Palczynski, whose daughter Ada appeared in the same production, agrees. "In such a short time, the kids looked like professionals. My daughter was sad to see it end!"

Plunkett, who has spent eleven years teaching drama at O.B. Gates and C.E. Curtis elementary schools, has directed and produced a number of productions, including *The Jungle Book*, *Peter Pan*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *No Strings Attached* (a Pinocchio retelling), as part of Curtis' Winter Program. Parents of students urged her to open a drama business of her own, and when a building on Rt. 10 went up for lease, Plunkett saw a way to expand the fun of those productions to children throughout the community.

Classes at Plunkett's Drama Club will begin in June, with two five-week sessions being held; the first will run from June 16-July 18 and the second from July 21-August 22. At the end of classes, a final performance will be given for family, friends, and community.

"What sets The Drama Club apart from other drama companies is that each class will have a separate performance at the end of every session," says Plunkett. "We don't lump all of the classes together for one performance with a hundred or more kids in it. We have small classes that allow each child to shine and give them a significant role in their performance. And every child is guaranteed a part."

Classes are broken down by age "grades K-1, 2-3, 3-5, and 6-8" and will allow each participant to grow comfortable onstage and to learn to express themselves through speech, dance, song, and movement.

"Not only is a child's self-esteem heightened when they perform onstage, but also their overall view of their place in the world and what they can achieve in it," Plunkett says. "It opens all sorts of doors for their future and expands their horizons."

Registration for classes at The Drama Club is currently underway. All registration is done on a first-come, first-served basis, and late registrations will only be accepted if class space is available. Registration forms and initial payments

are due by June 1; half of the session fee is due at registration and the second half is due by the first day of class. The cost of classes includes the registration fee, scripts and practice CD, performance fees, and the use of costumes. A full list of classes, schedules, and costs, as well as registration forms, may be found at www.thedramaclub.biz.

The Drama Club, Inc. is located at 4500 W. Hundred Rd. For more information or to register for classes, call 768-0023.

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