

Local dancers stage holiday classic: *The Nutcracker*

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MARYVILLE - Turning Pointe Academy of Dance in Maryville, will present the holiday classic, *The Nutcracker*, on December 9th and 10th. A sensory-friendly performance will take place on the evening of December 10th for special needs audience members.

The Nutcracker tells the story of young Clara and her magical journey upon receiving a beautiful Nutcracker doll. Clara encounters a fierce battle between toy soldiers and mice, an enchanted forest, and the dazzling Land of Sweets. "We are excited to present

the 5th annual production, and are especially looking forward to our first sensory-friendly performance,” says Turning Pointe’s Founder and Director, Dianna Andrews-Gaither.

Besides providing family-friendly entertainment, *The Nutcracker* allows area dancers, ages 8 and up, the opportunity to perform in a professional-like setting. The dancers auditioned in early summer and have been rehearsing since September. Several guest artists from the St. Louis metro area round out the cast. “I am so proud of the dancers’ and guest artists’ hard work and commitment,” says Andrews-Gaither.



The 2017 *Nutcracker* production has classical ballet performances familiar to audiences, but also includes some fun surprises with tap, hip hop, and acrobatics. The production’s choreography is a collaboration among Turning Pointe’s choreographers/instructors and guest choreographers. “*The Nutcracker* has a little holiday magic for everyone, and we love that it has become an annual event for families,” adds Andrews-Gaither.

Turning Pointe’s performances of *The Nutcracker* are Saturday, December 9 at 2pm and 6pm and Sunday, December 10 at 2pm. The sensory-friendly performance is Sunday, December 10 at 6pm. All performances are at the Collinsville High School Theater. Tickets are available at tututix.com/Turningpointeacademy or 1-855-222-2TIX.

Turning Pointe Academy of Dance offers a wide variety of classes for children of all ages, skill levels, and abilities. The studio is located at 34 Executive Plaza, Maryville. 618-691-8506. turningpointeacademy.net.

