

EYE ON O.C.



By Anne Valdespino

BALLET ETUDES STEPS UP FOR NEEDY KIDS

O.C. DANCE COMPANY WILL STAGE FREE 'NUTCRACKER.'

'The Nutcracker'

When: 7 p.m. Dec. 7
Where: Huntington Beach High School Auditorium, 1905 Main St.
Also: Preshow talk at 6:30 p.m.
How to help: Know some students who might qualify to attend? Call Laura Pash, 714-504-3809. Want to help out with a donation? Visit balletetudes.com.

More than 500 underprivileged kids will get to see "The Nutcracker" for free next month, thanks to a new community outreach program by Ballet Etudes in Huntington Beach.

"This goes hand in hand with our mission statement: to bring the art of ballet to children who wouldn't otherwise have the chance to see it or to allow kids to perform in a professional-type setting," company spokeswoman Tami Simons said.

Ballet Etudes, a nonprofit youth ballet company, has been bringing shows

to audiences for 16 years. This is the first time it has offered a free, full-length "Nutcracker," and the response has been overwhelming, Simons said.

"Local retailers have helped out with food and water donations. We're getting a lot of kids from the Orangewood Children's Home coming in with their mentors. Our capacity is 619, so we're getting close to selling out."

Did interest exceed expectations? "Oh yes," Simons said. "We're definitely planning for next year."

- PAUL HODGINS, the Register



COURTESY OF BALLET ETUDES

Ballet Etudes' free "Nutcracker" performance is set for Dec. 7.

A NEW SPIN ON CHARITY

ABOUT MORE THAN CLEAN CLOTHES FOR THE NEEDY, LAUNDRY LOVE'S VOLUNTEERS TEND THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY.

"Vitaly important, but relatively simple," said **Scott Overpeck**, director of Laundry Love in Santa Ana, as he addressed the group of approximately 40 volunteers. The organization met this month to help wash clothes for more than 30 people in need at Lavanderia on East Santa Ana Boulevard in Santa Ana. "It doesn't take much, it just takes a couple of volunteers and some quarters," he said.

The community love and suds come together the third Thursday of every month. Some line up to wait for the 8 p.m. wash as early as lunchtime. Through individual and corporate donations, **LaundryLoveSantaAna.com** helps unemployed locals like **Carlos Sanchez** of Santa Ana keep his clothes clean. "I used to be a mechanic. Now I help people by fixing their bikes and they help me with some food and money," Sanchez said, holding his dog, Rocky. "I don't have money to spend on washing my clothes, so I come for Laundry Love."

Saving money on an essential chore is the main mission, but there's an added benefit, Overpeck said. "There's so much downtime between doing laundry, you're kind of forced to communicate," he said. "It helps people and the economy. Instead of spending money on laundry, they buy corn from the vendor on the corner."

The whir of washing machines is often drowned out by the jukebox and laughter of kids playing games and drawing. It's more like a party than a night of charity and giving. "It's fun," said volunteer **Helen Wu** of Irvine. "It's like hanging out with old friends."

- MORGAN McLAUGHLIN, for the Register



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LAUNDRY LOVE

Laundry Love's volunteers - including, from left, Reina Tan, Evelin Lopez, Anthony Vu and Carmen Romero - get together in Santa Ana once a month to do laundry for needy people.



Mechanic Carlos Sanchez of Santa Ana, who takes advantage of Laundry Love's services regularly, brought his dog Rocky recently.



Some days the line forms at noon for an evening session.

IN THE DETAILS

A CROWD SIPs WINE AT SUNSET TO HELP A GROUP THAT FIGHTS CHILD ABUSE.



NEWPORT BEACH VINEYARDS

The setting: Newport Beach Vineyards and Winery.



RAISE FOUNDATION

O.C. Sheriff Sandra Hutchens and O.C. Fire Authority Chief Keith Richter.



RAISE FOUNDATION

Sue Fine with Deborah and Henry Mayhew, from left.



RAISE FOUNDATION

Nur and Rani Rabbat hold silent auction items.