



Tap instructor Susan McCollom leads students in warm-up routine

Local Dance Studio Provides Variety of Opportunity for All

By Anna Eames

From ballet to breakdancing, the upbeat and popular Rhythm Room Dance and Movement Center of Lafayette entails the grouping of several different types of dance, as well as aerobic and toning classes that are adaptable to experience level. This relatively young but steadily growing dance studio provides an encouraging atmosphere as well as a wide variety of classes for everyone from beginner to pre-professional.

Retired professional dancer and current owner of the Rhythm Room Dance and Movement Center of Lafayette, Dianna Rowley opened the studio in its first location, Walnut Creek, in 2000, and has since nearly outgrown her current location in Lafayette. The studio plans on expanding in its current location very soon, as many teen and children classes are overflowing.

With as diverse an array of experience and intensity levels of students as that of the class options, the studio provides a low-stress environment. They provide training for aspiring professionals, confidence for weekend club-goers, and exercise for those who are ready to leave their StairMaster and treadmill days behind.

The demise of the best fitness efforts often comes due to early disincentives and obstacles. No immediate result, no point. This excuse is officially gone.

With a workout like the Rhythm Room supplies, one wants to go back week after week. It provides an ideal exercise which allows the burning calories, the building of a talent, as well as the relieving of stress in a single hour.

"It's more than just a physical exercise; it's a mental exercise," said Rowley. "It's also a good outlet [and]...a stress reliever. That's one of the main benefits of dance. We have a lot of people who are referred to our studio from psychologists because people need an outlet to exert their energy."

Rowley also strongly encourages people with diabetes, like herself, to get involved in dance. "I am an insulin-dependent diabetic, and my office manager is also a professional dancer and an insulin-dependent diabetic. We want parents to feel safe, if they have a child that is diabetic...in putting them in an active situation," said Rowley. "We know how to handle those situations, and it's really important for young kids who have that disease to be encouraged and to

feel creative, and to build a talent without fear."

The benefits of this type of exercise are complemented by an overall positive and constructive atmosphere. "The Rhythm Room is very encouraging, very positive, so when people come they feel really good," said Rowley.

The studio offers classes in hip-hop, ballet (for students as young as five), belly dancing, salsa, jazz, tap, showgirl, ballroom, and much more.

They also have a unique boys' program which incorporates hip-hop and breakdancing for teens and children.

"[The Rhythm Room] provides a physical workout, it's a spiritual, mental, emotional workout, and it creates a positive energy in people," said Rowley.

Find registration forms, class schedules and a calendar of weeklong summer dance camps for kids online at www.rhythmroomdance.com or at the Rhythm Room Dance and Movement Center, located at 3330 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Mail registration forms to this address or come by and watch classes in session.



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