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**CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY FOR BALLET LUBBOCK:**

**LUBBOCK AREA FOUNDATION AWARDS \$2,000 GRANT, MAKING POSSIBLE FREE NUTCRACKER PERFORMANCES TO ENTIRE LISD-4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

**Ballet Lubbock has received a \$2,000 grant from the new Sybil Harrington Endowment for the Arts (a fund managed by the Lubbock Area Foundation, LAF) to support free performances of The Nutcracker to the entire Lubbock Independent School District's fourth grade, in December 2007.**

**The LAF grant will help support Ballet Lubbock's production expenses, so that these performances may be offered at *no cost* to either the district or students. This partnership between Ballet Lubbock & LISD began just last year, as nearly 2,100 fourth graders came to the Civic Center in December '06 to watch a live performance of The Nutcracker. Prior to performances, educational packets were sent to each LISD 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, explaining the story behind The Nutcracker ballet and incorporating it into traditional classroom subjects. Artistic Director Yvonne Racz then made site visits to elementary schools, teaching 4<sup>th</sup> graders basic ballet technique and terminology. Support from the Harrington Endowment of the Lubbock Area Foundation makes the Ballet Lubbock/LISD partnership possible in '07.**

Ballet Lubbock's Artistic Director Yvonne Racz is entering her tenth anniversary season with the Ballet, which was founded in 1969. Of the LISD/Nutcracker performances, she says, "This is a rare opportunity for 4<sup>th</sup> grade children to have their own private performance of The Nutcracker Ballet. They are exposed to a performing art that entails dance, music, costumes, acting and a narration that detail the story and the behind-the-scenes production. The Nutcracker/LISD performances encourage children to see more of the performing arts as a new experience to appreciate."

**Ballet Lubbock is a private, nonprofit organization with a mission to provide classical ballet training to students aged 3 through adult, and to maintain a pre-professional performing company. Outreach programs, such as the Nutcracker collaboration with LISD, broaden Ballet Lubbock's educational impact and bring classical dance to the broadest possible audience on the South Plains.**

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**Lubbock Area Foundation** is a nonprofit organization that exists to help people who care about the Lubbock area to invest – at any level – in its future. As the community Foundation for the South Plains, the Lubbock Area Foundation provides a vehicle for building permanent charitable endowments for the benefit of this area. Grants are awarded from funds based on the interests of the donor or through an open competitive process that is responsible to the changing needs of our community.

Nutcracker music, still images and footage, as well as interviews with Ballet Lubbock personnel, may be obtained by contacting the Ballet's Executive Director Laura Berry at 785-3090 or via e-mail: [laura\\_berry@sbcglobal.net](mailto:laura_berry@sbcglobal.net). To learn more about Ballet Lubbock, explore our website at [www.BalletLubbock.org](http://www.BalletLubbock.org) and be sure to visit the "Press Room" page.

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