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### **COYB Nutcracker Season in Full Swing**

*Nearly 60 dancers, families, COYB board volunteers and professionals put finishing touches on annual tradition*

**Newark, Ohio (November 10, 2008)** - The 2008 Central Ohio Youth Ballet's "The Nutcracker" has entered its final stages of preparation. This week, the troupe will begin technical "put togethers" - whereby Bob Cole, artistic director, Jennifer Fowler, assistant artistic director and their team will put the entire performance together, start to finish, looking at each segment with a critical eye for artistic and technical quality. The 2008 Nutcracker will be performed at The Midland Theater on Thanksgiving weekend, November 28-30 and at The Wagner Theater at Ohio University in Lancaster the weekend of December 6 & 7. Tickets are now on sale through the Midland ([www.MidlandTheater.org](http://www.MidlandTheater.org) or by calling 740.345.LIVE) for the Newark performance and at Fairfield National Bank's main branch and Lancaster-area Kroger and Meijer stores for the Lancaster performance.

Nearly 60 youth dancers from studios across Licking, Knox, Fairfield, Muskingham, Perry and Coshocton counties have been rehearsing for this holiday tradition since the first week in September. This year's performance promises to be bigger and more impressive than ever, in that the talent of the dancers is robust. In fact, this year's performance of The Nutcracker boasts 23 soloists – and a near record number of dancers overall. "We were thrilled by the quality of talent that presented itself in auditions this year," shares Denise Crews, President of The Central Ohio Youth Ballet. "Not only are there more soloists than in the past, but because of the talent, this year we were able to add additional roles for queens and snow princes – as well as youth partnering performances such as Snow Pas."

This year, the lead of Clara is being played by three Licking County-area youth. Kennedy Ditzhazy and Madison Weisend, both students at St. Francis de Sales school and Nolie Wagner, a student at Granville Intermediate School will share the role. Demetri Carpenter, a Lancaster-area student and Timothy Hayes, a home-schooled student in Newark will share the role of Prince.

An annual tradition in Licking county since 1994, The Nutcracker is artistically directed by Bob Cole and assisted by Jennifer Fowler. It brings together talented student dancers from nearly a dozen studios throughout six counties, including The Ballet Academy, Joan Garrett Dance Arts, Patty's Dance Studio, Carole Dance School, Dance Works, Denison Dance Department, Infusion Dance, Miss Alyssa's School of Dance,

Pinnell Dance Centre, Reinita's Baton & Dance, Richard Earlye Dance Studio and Susan's Tap n Toe. Early in his career, Cole danced for five years with The National Ballet of Canada and trained at California's Riverside Ballet Arts, The Joffrey Ballet School and at The National Ballet School. His students have received scholarships to The National Ballet School, The Julliard School, Virginia School of the Arts, The Harold Conservatory and Interlochen Arts Academy.

#### About the Central Ohio Youth Ballet

The COYB, a 501C3 nonprofit organization, has established itself as a successful training ground for talented dancers. Their mission is to provide professional-quality performance opportunities to all area dancers and quality performances to central Ohio audiences. The generous support of area donors ensures that the COYB's performances and outreach programs continue to grow and flourish.

**[www.COYBallet.org](http://www.COYBallet.org)**