

## For Immediate Release

**Contact: Bertina Dew**  
**Executive Director**  
**Kingsport Ballet**  
**423/863-1280**

**220 Broad Street, Suite 300**  
**Kingsport, TN 37660**  
[www.kingsportballet.org](http://www.kingsportballet.org) - [bsdew@kingsportballet.org](mailto:bsdew@kingsportballet.org)

### **KINGSPORT BALLETT AND MARK FREEMAN ASSOCIATES PARTNER TO BUILD SPRUNG FLOOR**

In a fitting tribute to the opening of the Company's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, the Kingsport Ballet is enjoying a new sprung floor, designed by Mark Freeman Associates after the latest designs for dance surfaces, and built with the help of volunteers – parents and students.

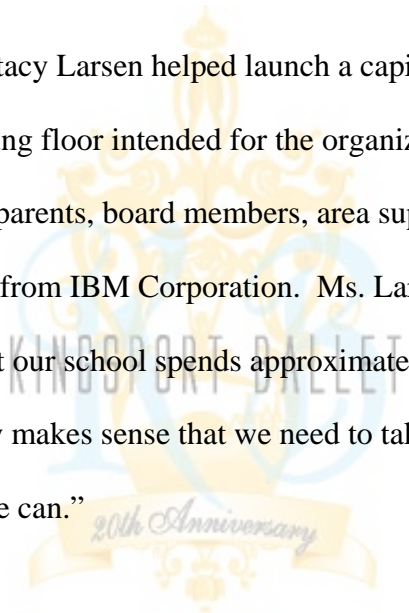
The large studio at Kingsport Ballet doubles as a mini-theatre, and has until now had beautiful maple wood floors, restored and refinished during the company's capital campaign and renovations of 1999. The wood floors lie underneath a vinyl dance surface often referred to as "Marley," after the brand name. While wood floors are adequate for dance, a state-of-the-art sprung floor system creates resilience and impact absorption, benefitting not only the dancers but the teachers, making it an optimal surface for the athleticism required in high-level dance classes. The new sprung floor is a semi-portable, floating surface that is laid on top the existing maple floor without any adverse effects to the underlying wood.

The Company was able to carry out its plan for the construction of the floor by contracting Mark Freeman Associates to make their own, local version of otherwise

expensive, commercial sprung floors, and they generously produced it at a fraction of the standard cost.

MFA job foreman, Robbie Burke, enjoyed the eclectic labor force provided by Kingsport Ballet: “This is the best crew I’ve ever had!,” he said. Students, parents and teachers worked for several days to help with all sorts of tasks, including adhering foam pieces, fitting wood panels, hauling wood, and drilling screws.

Kingsport Ballet volunteer Stacy Larsen helped launch a capital campaign earlier this year in order to fund the sprung floor intended for the organization’s largest studio. Donations were received by parents, board members, area supporters, and there was even a generous donation secured from IBM Corporation. Ms. Larsen told would-be donors “An advanced level dancer at our school spends approximately 630 hours each year dancing on this floor - it only makes sense that we need to take care of those knees, joints and ankles in the best way we can.”



Kingsport Ballet artist in residence, Rostislav Dzabraev was on hand with his high jumps and athletic moves to test out the flooring prototypes and guide the designers toward the optimal resilience and firmness.

Kingsport Ballet is a non-profit school and company, presenting quality ballet performances to the entire region. They are funded for general operations by the Tennessee Arts Commission under an agreement with the National Endowment for the

Arts. The company's substantial outreach program DANCE CO is funded in part by the Kingsport Community Foundation and by the City of Kingsport.

Look for the company's Russian **Nutcracker December 4-6, 2008** at the Niswonger Performing Arts Center, and the Platinum Celebration: Acts from ballet favorites, Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake and Paquita, at Eastman, April 24-26<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

For information call: 423/378-3967.

