

Dear Nutcracker families,

As most of you know, it is a long-standing tradition for the children of *The Nutcracker* to exchange gifts with their cast. Although these gifts are typically modest, the few dollars spent add up collectively. With last year's unexpected financial trouble that faced Sacramento Ballet, this gift giving tradition presented an opportunity for our children to make a true difference. Last year, we encouraged our children to skip their gift exchange and donate to The Ballet. **As a result, we raised close to \$8000 for the Sacramento Ballet.**

This year, many families have expressed an interest in continuing this new tradition of making voluntary donations in lieu of gifts. Participating families felt that it was a perfect chance for their children to give back to an organization that gives them so many wonderful opportunities.

In fact, there is an outstanding new opportunity for us all to do just that! Many of you who have been involved with *The Nutcracker* remember Lt. Colonel Fred Shadle—"Colonel Fred" to so many—who passed away this last spring. When he retired from the military and came to Sacramento, he immediately recognized a need for supporters and volunteers to help our local arts community. For the last 45 years, Colonel Fred never missed volunteering for a Sacramento Ballet performance. His friendly face was often the first one to greet the children at the backstage door.

To honor this remarkable man, this year's children's donations will go to the Fred Shadle Fund for the training of pre-professional dancers.

We encourage you all to join this worthy cause.

Donations can be deposited in the drop box where you put your Nutcracker forms (in the credenza) labeled 'Fred Shadle Fund'. Please make checks payable to **Sacramento Ballet** with 'Col. Fred' in the memo. Complete the form by the drop box to receive an acknowledgement of your tax deductible gift. **Please have all donations in by December 5, 2009.** A collective check will be presented to the Cunninghams on opening night, December 10, 2009, which is the 500th performance of Ron Cunningham's *The Nutcracker*.

Let's work together to continue Colonel Fred's legacy of giving and support Sacramento Ballet!

If you have any questions, please contact Katita Schloemann at irschloemann@surewest.net.

Sincerely,
Katita Schloemann and Liz Coleman,
Nutcracker Parents