

In Our Dance Program

By Kathy McCormick

Star Performance Centre

Liberty Township, OH

Hi USASF friends! The fall is such a busy time in all of our studios. Here is a look at what is going on with Star Performance Centre in Liberty Township, Ohio.

With the first big competition over and moving to the heart of our season, things are moving at a rapid pace here at Star! We got about half of our teams out in October at the first competition. I am happy to report that there were no costume or hair malfunctions! That's a huge success as we have so many teams this year. The first run for new costumes is always nerve racking! We will have at least 34 different teams on the floor this season! (There may be a couple more. We are still deciding on some team splits as we work through new skills and developing technique for some of our dancers.). We are still working on choreography for many of our teams so that we can be in full force at the first bid event in December.

This time of year, everything is very fluid around the studio. The choreography is still in "development mode" with lots of changes! It's a daily process to find the right fit between the technical push and still getting a clean routine out on the floor. That is true at every level. The tiny teams are learning so much and growing so quickly that their skill sets change constantly. We want to challenge them while still keeping their experience fun. The senior and open teams are really starting to feel the pressure and drive for a bid to Dance Worlds. Every level between tiny and senior/open is getting lots of attention to the same sort of details right now. Of course, that balance tends to change through the year when the Worlds teams start their final preparations. There have been lots of choreography "crashes" on weekends to get dances finished. (Well...at least the first draft!)

What does it look like at Star right now? It's a bit of a mess, to be honest! Not the way all of us coaches really strive to keep up our space, but there's good reason for it! I mentioned those 34 teams earlier...they all have costumes, shoes and accessories arriving daily right now. We have a very large competitive program, which we refer to as our Star Family, and it takes thousands of pieces of sparkly items to make them look great on stage! I heard our studio owner say that she had ordered over 1,900 items for the teams so far this year! So...there are boxes full of all those costumes and shoes organized in our main rooms. We also love doing a fun production piece each year, so there is scenery that is being built and painted in one of our large studio spaces. That has been really fun to turn and leap around in tech class!

As a coaching staff, it's all hands on deck this time of year. We try to have a few coaches work with each team. We switch up our schedules to try to have "fresh eyes" on the teams and routines whenever possible. It also gives us a chance to get to work with more dancers at each level. That way when we are at competitions or performances the kids feel comfortable with our whole staff. It's a great luxury to be able to share the work load with such a gifted group of coaches.

We have at least one competition a month starting in October and stretching through May. We do a fun holiday show that features our recreational classes and a recital at the end of the year for our classes and competition teams. So, when is our down time you ask? Come on...if you are a coach you know that's a silly question! We have about two weeks a year when we truly slow down...and that's when we lay by a pool or on a beach with our iPod cranked thinking of ideas for the next season!!

Who am I? I am Miss Kathy! I am proud to have been coaching and teaching at Star Performance Centre for a decade. I love our dancers, families and staff...and I love what USASF Dance has offered our industry. Dance Worlds is like no other competition because of the spirit of cooperation and love of dance that exists there. Our kids work hard to earn bids so that they can experience all that is Worlds each year. The safety and judging guidelines are helping us to be better as a competitive art. Wishing you all a great season with your dancers and families! Can't wait to see you all along the journey this year! Choose to be happy, and thanks for checking in for what's happening right now in USASF Dance...Star Performance Centre edition!