

**Fighting for equality**

Kids played a significant role during the civil rights movement.

**sneakers, c8**

## BABY BALLERINAS



# Tiny dancers



Photos by KEVIN R. WEXLER/Herald News

Paula Chuquimarca and classmates twirl during their ballet and tap class for 3-year-olds at Gloria Frances School of Performing Arts in Wayne.

## Class for 3-year-olds is about fun not form

By ANDREA GURWITT  
Herald News

The girls trickle in, dressed in pink tutus and black tutus, their patent leathers tap tapping importantly on the wood floor.

They sit in a semi-circle for a moment to collect themselves, this group of 3- and 4-year-olds. Then they get up and form two lines before the mirror.

This is Tuesday's hour-long tap and ballet class called Pre-School I.

There are five pony-tailed, ruffled, sequined and flowered dancers at the moment. Then six, when Paula, in a black outfit with a pink sequined kitty, strides in and takes her place. Then seven, when Olivia, in black, too, with a big red bow in her hair, walks over.

Once she's satisfied that everyone's feet are together, Gloria Frances, owner and principal teacher of Gloria Frances School of Performing Arts on Hamburg Turnpike in Wayne, warms them up with "If You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands."

Clap, clap.  
"If you're happy and you know it, tap your toes."  
Tap, tap.

Tap, tap, tap – 21 times. Except for the enthusiastic tappers who go an extra two or three beats.  
"Voilà! Bravo dahlings!" Frances calls out in a non-threatening but well-projected voice.

When you're 3 years old, dance is not about form. You don't know what form is, and besides, you've barely perfected your walking skills. When you're 3, judging from this class of exuberant but well-behaved girls, dance is about twirling, making noise with your feet, and mastering simple two-part moves, not necessarily in unison.

And so the girls forge on, practicing their one-two skidoos, a sort of tap, tap, snap-the-foot-back-to-neutral move. Then their step, heel, step, which for some sounds like step, heel, STEP. And then a shuffle that calls for a foot to brush back, brush forward and land in place.

The girls are preparing for their spring recital,

Please see **BALLET, C4**

**ONLINE FEATURE**

For additional photos from Gloria Frances' dance class, please visit: [northjersey.com/ballet](http://northjersey.com/ballet)

## Combing the history of black hair

By KARSTEN IVEY  
Knight Ridder News Service

Today the black hair product business is a billion-dollar industry, fueled by black women's desire to keep their tresses looking good.

**CULTURAL HISTORY**

But hair in black America is not just about aesthetics. It's about self-esteem, identity, politics, economics, history and race.

**A brief timeline**

**1444:** Europeans trade on the west coast of Africa with people wearing elaborate hairstyles including locks, plaits and twists.

**1619:** First slaves brought to Jamestown; African language, culture and grooming tradition begin to disappear.

**1700s:** Calling black hair "wool," many whites dehumanize slaves. The more elaborate African hairstyles cannot be retained.

**1800s:** Without the combs and herbal treatments used in Africa, slaves rely on bacon grease, butter

and kerosene as hair conditioners and cleaners. Lighter-skinned, straight-haired slaves command higher prices at auction than darker, more kinky-haired ones. Internalizing color consciousness, blacks promote the idea that blacks with dark skin and kinky hair are less attractive and worth less.

**1865:** Slavery ends, but whites look upon black women who style their hair like white women as well-adjusted. "Good" hair becomes a prerequisite for entering certain schools, churches, social groups and business networks.

**1880:** Metal hot combs, invented in 1845 by the French, are readily available in the United States. The comb is heated and used to press and temporarily straighten kinky hair.

**1900s:** Madame C.J. Walker develops a range of hair care products for black hair. She popularizes the press and curl style. Some criticize her for encouraging black women to look white.

**1910:** Walker is featured in the Guinness Book of Records as the first American woman, self-made millionaire.

**1920s:** Marcus Garvey, a black nationalist, urges followers to embrace their natural hair and reclaim an African aesthetic.

**1954:** George E. Johnson launches the Johnson Products Empire with Ultra Wave Hair Culture, a "permanent" hair straightener for men that can be applied at home. A women's chemical straightener follows.

**1962:** Actress Cicely Tyson wears cornrows on the television drama "East Side/West Side."

**1966:** Model Pat Evans defies both black and white standards of beauty and shaves her head.

**1968:** Actress Diahann Carroll is the first black woman to star in a television network series, "Julia." She is a darker version of the all-American girl with straightened, curled hair.

**1970:** Angela Davis becomes an icon of Black Power with her large Afro.

**1971:** Melba Tolliver is fired from the ABC affiliate in New York for wearing an Afro while covering Tricia Nixon's wedding.

**1977:** The Jheri curl explodes on the black hair scene. Billed as a curly perm for blacks, the ultra moist hairstyle lasts through the 1980s.

Please see **HAIR, C4**

## BEST BETS

**POLAND MEETS RUSSIA:** The Moscow Chamber Orchestra will celebrate its 50th anniversary season with a New York concert at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall on Feb. 26 at 3 p.m. The concert will mark the only New York appearance of the season of Polish contralto Ewa Podles.



Ewa Podles

Conductor Constantine Orbelian will lead the orchestra in five of Prokofiev's Visions Fugitives, originally written for piano, and Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony in C minor, arranged from the String Quartet No. 8. Podles will be featured in the rarely heard Joan of Arc Cantata for voice and piano by Rossini, and Shostakovich's orchestration of Mussorgsky's "Songs and Dances of Death."

Haydn's Symphony No. 49, "La Passione," will open the program. The collaborations of Podles and Orbelian – whom Opera News called "the singer's dream collaborator" – have been hailed both onstage and on disc; they have made two recordings together, "Russian Arias" and "Handel Arias."

Tickets are \$30, \$45 and \$60, available through CenterCharge at (212) 721-6500. For more information visit [www.lincolncenter.org](http://www.lincolncenter.org) or [www.moscowchamberorchestra.com](http://www.moscowchamberorchestra.com).