

THE Andover Townsman ONLINE

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Community spirit jingles

Andover residents are finding a variety of ways to enjoy "the most wonderful time of the year."

Residents have watched many young Andover dancers enhance local productions of the Nutcracker, and still have the chance to see Dance Prism's Nutcracker at the Collins Center on Shawsheen Road this Saturday, Dec. 18, at 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 19 at 2:30 p.m.

Andoverites have also been decking the halls, perhaps none so successfully as Brenda Nason-Afshin who won a first place "Most Traditional" ribbon at Methuen's Festival of Trees. Her challenge was to create a beautiful tree, in seven days, to be raffled off among 240 others, at the 17th annual event, which provides money for historic preservation projects throughout the Merrimack Valley. Afshin, a community artist, is most recently known for her "Kindred Spirits" project where, based on a "kindness is contagious" concept, she arranges her own, multi-cultural, plush dolls to act out positive messages, on bulletin boards, in community spaces. One of her boards has been displayed at South Elementary School for years.

Afshin is also known as the assistant tap dance teacher of the "Sunset Tappers" at the



Tara Wilson and her daughter, Kaylin Wilson Ardizzone, of Andover were all smiles at the annual PCCD holiday party.



Andover High School student volunteer Sarah Papa helps Grace Karl with a temporary tattoo during the Professional Center for Child Development's holiday party. Grace's mother, Paula Karl, is a social worker in Early Intervention at the PCCD.

Andover Senior Center, a decorator for the newly resurrected "Crystal Ballroom dancing night, and an events decorator for Andover Youth Services, who helps a team of "elves" create a large variety of wreaths and kissing balls for the tree lot at Andover Skate Park during the holiday season.

Of course, it wouldn't be the holiday season without parties - and parties for people of all ages. The Professional Center for Child Development held its holiday affair at West Parish Church recently attracting 150 children, family members, and staff from the Osgood Street Center. They listened and sang along with Andover's Brian Corcoran to holiday and children's favorites. The group enjoyed a craft project, snacks, a coloring station, dancing, temporary tattoos and a visit from a much loved jolly fellow.

However, not all events have been able to get off the ground, yet.

Due to last Sunday's nearly day-long downpour, the annual tree lighting on the BallardVale Green has been rescheduled to Sunday, Dec. 19 at 5 p.m. Andover residents are invited to join neighbors for hot chocolate, treats and Christmas carols sung by candlelight.