

Perfect alignment
Chiropractor keeps Riverside dancers on their toes.
Health & Fitness, D-1

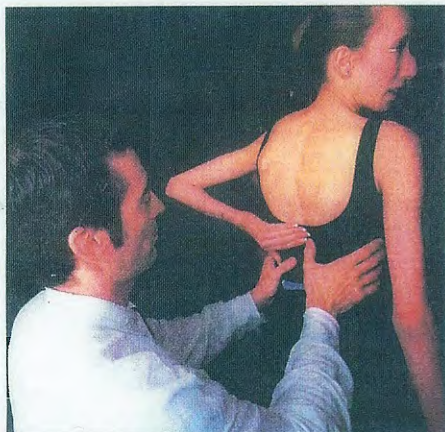
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HEALTH & FITNESS

HEALTH CALENDAR D3 • PERSONAL GROWTH D3 ENTERTAINMENT INSIDE D4

Backcracker to 'The Nutcracker'

Chiropractor works behind the scenes to keep ballet dancers aligned and on their toes.



Chiropractor Jack Giangliullo examines the back of California Riverside Ballet dancer Jerusha Needham, 14, before the Saturday matinee performance of "The Nutcracker" at Riverside's Municipal Auditorium.

By **Lauro Lucas**
The Press-Enterprise

RIVERSIDE

Chiropractor Jack Giangliullo made a long house call last weekend to the Riverside Ballet at the Municipal Auditorium.

"Dr. Jack," as he's known by patients, worked behind the scenes during the four "Nutcracker" performances.

"My triage setting," he said. Giangliullo was equipped with his "bag of tricks," including his table, unguents, sports tape, Tums, a stethoscope and an electrical stimulation machine.

Squeezed into a dressing room, he danced his deft fingers across the sore limbs of cast members eager for quick tune-ups.

"He's wonderful," said Riverside Carol Rizzo, 42, who played Grandma. During intermission, she lay face down on Dr. Jack's chiropractic table as he palpated her lower back.

This is the second consecutive year that artistic director Glenda Carhart enlisted Dr. Jack to crack backs that are out of whack.

"He's on call, making sure that everything stays aligned," said Carhart. "He's not waiting for a major disaster."

Giangliullo, 36, mostly treats foot and ankle, knee, hip, low back, neck and shoulder injuries, respectively.

"I watch their performances differently," said Dr. Jack, who volunteers his services. Sometimes he's in the wings, other times in the audience.

"I look at how stable their dancing is," he

explained. "I can see that when their bodies are off kilter a bit there are injuries."

His first patient before Saturday's matinee was Riverside Jerusha Needham, 14. While practicing, she'd hurt her back after colliding with another dancer.

Dr. Jack checks her out, tests her flexibility and finds no inflammation. "It's a little tender, that's all," said Jerusha.

Next, her sister Rebekah, 18, stretches face up on the table. "I need to get popped," she said.

"It's all about speed," said Dr. Jack, who quickly tugs on Rebekah's shins to align her hip joints. She giggled. A few minutes later and she's adjusted.

Dr. Jack, who lives in Corona del Mar and practices at the Pacific Spine & Sports Institute in Irvine, was a physical therapist before becoming a chiropractor.

After working with the Association of Volleyball Professionals, he made the leap to Ballet Pacifica in Irvine in 1994. For the last four years he's cared for dancers from around the world performing at the Irvine Barclay Theatre.

Carhart, who lives in Dana Point and teaches at UC Irvine, visited Giangliullo for a knee injury three years ago. "I was impressed," she said. "He really knows dance so well and all about dance injuries."

So she drafted him to tweak the aches and pains of her 132 cast members.

However, at the Riverside Ballet's "The Nutcracker" performances, there's lots of down time and like last year, no major injuries.

The most serious incident was a crew

Please see **CRACK, D-2**



Giangliullo, known as Dr. Jack, watches dancers from the wings, looking for signs of injury as they perform. He works with dancers before, during and after shows. Photos by David Shea / The Press-Enterprise



CRACK

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member who smacked a lighting boom and cut his head open. Dr. Jack shaved and cleaned the area, closed the cut with a butterfly bandage and sent the technician to the hospital.

Typically, Giangiulio tends to a half-dozen dancers. One of them, Aragorn Berner, 17, of Yermo, complained of a pulled hamstring. During intermission, Dr. Jack worked his magic to ease the pain

and taught Aragorn some strength and stretching exercises.

Giangiulio also massaged a cramp in the left calf muscle of 14-year-old Cameron Schwanz. Like several of the performers, Cameron, who lives in Corona, is one of Dr. Jack's patients in Irvine.

Dr. Jack also administers big doses of TLC. "Hugs are a big part of the treatment," he said. "Dancers know their bodies very well, but I'm dealing with fragile emotions. It's hard to tell them, 'You're sitting this one out.'"