

# Darby 's Dancers

# June Newsletter

## Contact Information

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[darbysdancers.com](http://darbysdancers.com)

## Fundraising Idea

Applebee's Pancake Breakfast  
You sell tickets for \$10. You keep \$5 and Applebee's gets \$5. Invite all the families at your studio and your friends and neighbors for a fun morning together. It only takes a couple of hours and requires very little work.

## Featured Studio

Darby's Dancers - Maple Grove, MN at The Dance Complex

35 students and volunteers

Participated in Act I Talent and Tribute Dance Competitions in special categories and won the Touching Hearts Award.



## It's Recital Time

This is the very first group of Darby's Dancers who danced in their first recital in the spring of 2014. Ten kids and 10 volunteers, 1 teacher, 1 class. This was only 7 months after Darby passed away from leukemia in October 2013. Dawn Turner, friend of the Jones family, started the group all on her own in Maple Grove, MN. Dawn's girls were friends of Darby's when the Turners lived in Alabama. The Joneses had the idea for starting Darby's Dancers but weren't quite up to the task so soon after their daughter's death. So Dawn took on the job in memory of sweet Darby. Today Dawn's group has 35 kids and volunteers, 3 classes a week and 4 teachers. They are hosted by the Dance Complex and owner Amber Huffman. This spring Valerie will attend 10 recitals all over the Midwest and Southeast. Meeting each child and their family is both her passion and her personal goal.



## Dancer of the Month

Let's begin with the dancer that started it all, Darby Emma Jones. Darby started dancing at the age of 9 at Merrimack Hall Performing Arts Center in Huntsville, AL in a class designed specifically for children with special needs. Her last dancing opportunity was in 2014 at Children's Hospital in Birmingham, AL when Darby and her friends put on a recital for the doctors and nurses after Darby was diagnosed with her 4th round of leukemia and had to miss her dance recital in Huntsville. Darby loved to share her love of dance and performing with anyone who would watch her. She loved her weekly classes, not only for the dancing, but because she got to be with her friends and be a part of all the happenings at Merrimack Hall. Today hundreds of lives are being positively affected by their participation in Darby's Dancers whether they are a dancer, volunteer, teacher, parent, owner or observer. One ripple has caused many more ripples to spread across this marvelous opportunity for children with special needs. That first little pebble.....Sweet Darby!

## Growing ever Since

Today there are 21 groups of Darby's Dancers in 13 different states. We will feature one dance studio in each newsletter. Valerie Jones, mother of Darby, works tirelessly promoting Darby's Dancers and recruiting new members. Her goal is to have a minimum of one Darby's Dancers in each state and ultimately to go international. Most of the groups have Facebook pages. You are encouraged to look at their pages to see the exciting things that are going on in different areas. Each page starts with "Darby's Dancers", like the national organization's page.

The national organization also has a website, [www.darbysdancers.com](http://www.darbysdancers.com). Every effort is made to keep it current with information, new pictures, videos and publicity pieces.

Please help us connect with prospective new studios. If you know someone who owns a dance studio or who dances regularly at a dance studio, please give them Valerie's contact information. One of the Maple Grove groups today is pictured below.

