

Greenwich Time[®]

www.greenwichtime.com

VOL. LXX NO. 57

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1877 • SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2007

Cultural exhibition



Russian dance troupe and chorus perform for Eagle Hill students

By Andrew Shaw
Staff Writer

Frilly skirts were twirling, heels were clicking and fingers were plucking at yesterday's performance by two Russian music and dance troupes that visited Eagle Hill School.

The Moscow Nights, a trio of Russian musicians based in Ohio, and the Golden Gates, a group of dancing and singing school-children who traveled from St. Petersburg, performed for the student body during an hour-long assembly.

The troupes wore traditional Russian garb, with the girls going through several costume changes to show off a variety of dresses to go with their braided hair and headpieces. The boys wore bright shirts to match the girls' outfits.

But it was the music and dancing that got the audience's attention at Eagle Hill, a private school for children with learning disabilities.

Moscow Nights includes two teenagers, Shishkin Yuri and Sergei Ruksha, who play the balalaika, a Russian version of the guitar with three strings and a triangular body. Vitaliy Bezrodnov, who emceed the event, played the bayan accordion, which uses round buttons instead of piano-style keys to choose notes.

They were accompanied by Golden Gates,

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Bob Luckey Jr./Staff photos

Russian folk dancer Svetlana Horoshkova, 7, top, wearing a traditional Russian folk outfit, performs for students at Eagle Hill School in Greenwich. Above, Aleksei Kufyrev lifts Anastasia Alexeeva, 15, into the air during a Russian folk dance. Left, Nick Misisco, 11, plays a tambourine while dancing with the Moscow Nights musicians and Golden Gates dance troupe during their visit to the school.



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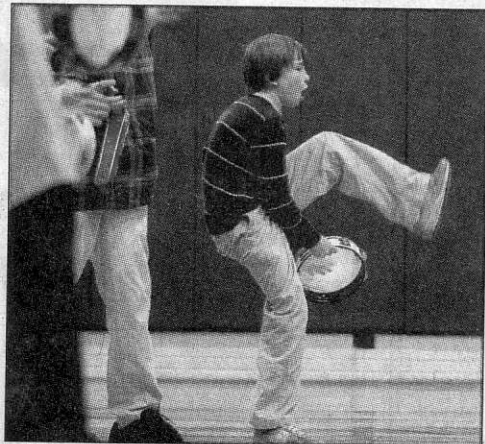
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consisting of students of the St. Petersburg Conservatory, a public school specializing in music education. The children travel to the United States during their winter break from school and perform traditional dances and songs they have studied. Both *Moscow Nights* and *Golden Gates* are in the middle of a 15-state tour that began last month.

After several songs and group dances, Bezrodnov asked for volunteers to play percussion instruments and try a Russian folk dance.

Jake Presson, 14, was more than happy to join one of the dancers as the entire group practiced the equivalent of a line

dance, with partners switching with each other as they traveled in a circle.

"I just wanted to do the best I could," Jake said after spending a few minutes laughing, studying his partner's feet and trying his best to keep up with the fast tempo. Presson added he won't soon forget his dance lesson. "I'm going to break it down, man, bust that out at a party. I've got to keep it going."

School officials said that interactive, hands-on element is exactly what they hoped for

when they invited the performers. It also fit in with Eagle Hill's theme for the school year, multiculturalism, as the students are studying Asia.

"We want our students to know that there's so much more out there than their own world," said Angela Paulone, a teacher and member of the multicultural committee. Seeing peers their age perform should help Eagle Hill students understand how other cultures work, she said. "We want them to branch it out."

Trump picked wrong spot for casino

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Pennsylvania Gambling Control Board has three words for Donald

Trump's project would have been built near an "economically depressed (area) with decaying infrastructure" calling into