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Performer's Warehouse Brings Holiday Cheer to Seniors at Sommerby of Alpharetta

The weekend's balmy weather may not have felt like Christmas outside, but inside Sommerby retirement community in Alpharetta, residents were treated to a Christmas extravaganza of dances, songs, and skits. The performances were put on by 50 members aged 5-18 of



Performer's Warehouse.

Sommerby, celebrating its 4th anniversary this month, encourages local groups to come and entertain the residents. "The residents love it, especially this time of year" said Julie Purdy, director of Lifestyle Programs at Sommerby.

Dancers from the Performer's Warehouse put on a Christmas show for residents of Sommerby of Alpharetta.

Bill Rowe, who has been a living at Sommerby for 2 years, especially enjoyed the performance. "They'll never top this!" he exclaimed. His wife, Elizabeth, agreed. "They're so cute and they have such poise" she said. "It was just wonderful!" The seniors came decked out in their Christmas best, and filled the large room. There were smiles all around as the groups of children danced and sang to holiday favorites, such as "I'll be Home for Christmas," "Jingle Bell Rock," "Run-Run Rudolph" and "Step Into Christmas." There were even some short plays, including a story about a poplar tree that wanted to be a Christmas tree, and a Shakespeare comedy, amidst the festive decorations in the bright common room.



Bill and Elizabeth Rowe, residents of Sommerby, enjoying the show

The performance was just one of several activities for the day, including shuffleboard, bridge, and a viewing of *Miracle on 34th Street*. Activities such as this show fulfill one of Somerby's



Residents Bill and Elizabeth Rowe reconnect with dancer Tess Luman.

goals – linking residents to their communities. The Rowes unexpectedly reconnected with one of the young dancers, Tess Luman (age 13) at the show. “We used to go to the same church when I was little,” Tess said, grinning. “It was so fun to see them again after all these years!” The performance was a highlight of her Christmas season; the residents were “all so appreciative – we had a great time, and it felt great to see them smile. After we danced we met with the audience and they all told us how much they loved it.”

Since its opening in June 2010, the Performer's Warehouse, located off McFarland Road, has offered dance, acting, and vocal instruction to kids aged 5-18. More than 130 students participate in the three-dozen classes taught throughout the week, in addition to private instruction by professional staff. Director Holly Garmon said this performance is “the type of activity that Performer's Warehouse was designed to do. For us it's all about the kids,” she explained, “this show gave the kids an opportunity to perform, and was a chance for them to give back to the community.”