

# Abigail Barton's Ballerina Dreams

BY JONATHAN KANE

Abigail Barton, Wood River High School junior, carrying a 4.0 GPA and a member of National Honor Society, has a real affinity for the arts, with most of her energy channeled into ballet and photography. "Growing up in this Valley has been great," Barton said. "It's a really nice place and there are so many activities and a lot of art opportunities for me. The school has so many programs, like in music and the dramatic arts academy. There is also the Sun Valley Summer Symphony, two ballet schools and plays at the nexStage Theatre and at St. Thomas. There is just so much to do." A lot of Barton's focus has been on dance, specifically ballet, which she has been doing formally since she was five. "I always wanted to be a ballerina from the earliest age. I remember my grandparents getting me a pair of ballet shoes when I was four years old and they were the coolest things ever. I was always just a twirly and dancey person from the earliest years," Barton said with a smile. "I just wasn't into soccer and what the other kids were into. Actually I can't remember a time when I wasn't into dance." So at a tender age she started with the Sun Valley Ballet School run by Sherry Horton. "My first memory was being packed at the bar with a lot of other girls. It was very official. I also remember getting a special leotard with a skirt that matched and I was so excited." She first performed at six. "It was Alice in Wonderland. I was a white rose and wore a tutu. There were four of us and we danced on stage by

ourselves. I probably wasn't nervous. I think I was more excited than anything." The school performs The Nutcracker every other year, alternating with Alice in Wonderland in December at the nexStage. They also do a showcase in the spring that includes more than ballet. "My weekly schedule is for an hour and a half of class four times a week but it will increase because this Monday we start rehearsals for the Wizard of Oz. But on the average week I study ballet, jazz and modern, but at the Sun Valley Ballet School we mainly focus on ballet, which is my favorite. I do like dancing modern in the spring, but my main focus and love is



ballet. It teaches you a lot of discipline and focus because it is really hard to get better at it. Performance is far and away the best part of it all. Everything you've been working on leads to this one event. The combination of lights, costumes, makeup and the audience leads to the biggest adrenaline rush." As to the future, Barton is not quite sure. "I want to dance through college but I'm not sure if I will pursue it professionally but I'm sure I'll continue it as a hobby. It's been a big part of my life and I don't want to close any doors." For this talented young student, doors are surely only going to open.

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