

**Press Release Wednesday, April 16, 2008**

**“Let Every Child Shine”**

*World class artists shine the spotlight on special needs children on the Eastside*

Music is the universal language. Viola virtuoso and painter Emanuel Vardi and his wife, concert violinist and artist Lenore Vardi, are using that language to advocate for special needs children. *Let Every Child Shine* is a benefit evening to raise awareness and funding for quality arts programming for this underserved population. Saturday May 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm Emerald Ballet Theatre (EBT) will host the Vardis ([www.vardiart.com](http://www.vardiart.com)) as they perform, display their artwork, and hold an informal fireside chat about art and music. Mr. Vardi's life achievements are impressive, including museum exhibitions and time as solo violist and member of the NBC Symphony under famed conductor, Arturo Toscanini. Mrs. Vardi, painter, recitalist and chamber musician, has performed and recorded with such artists as Itzhak Perlman and Placido Domingo. The Vardis recently relocated from New York City to North Bend and generously share experience and passion for the arts with their Eastside community. The theme of the evening, *Let Every Child Shine*, is inspired by a song written by a mother with two special needs daughters. She reminds us that every child can shine in their own time when they are given the chance.

Creativity and self-expression are important to everyone. Specific programs that benefit from the May 10<sup>th</sup> event are *Emerald Creativity Camp (music technology/art/movement)* June 23-27 and August 18-22, and *Exceptional Dancers* - ongoing classes beginning this September. Connie Wible, Mercer Island resident and director of *Emerald Creativity Camp*, has over thirty years experience as a musician, teacher, and mother of a son with Asperger Syndrome. Her work combines these attributes into joyful, encouraging, and inclusive programs designed for all children. “Working with technology and keyboards is a perfect way to introduce music into the lives of Autism spectrum kids,” explains Wible. “Many can participate in our camps for the general population but I wanted to create a camp designed specifically for children with more intense needs.” Sarah Jacobsen of EBT elaborates, “Children can express themselves in three modalities - auditory, visual, and kinesthetic.” Jacobsen has experience teaching therapeutic classes for mentally and physically disabled dancers in public schools and on university campuses.

*Let Every Child Shine* is a good cause and also provides an excellent evening of entertainment. In addition to the Vardis, musicians from the community including the Katrina Wible Trio and others will perform throughout the evening. Viktoria Titova, Artistic Director of Emerald Ballet Theatre, is a former ballerina with the Bolshoi Theatre (Grigorovich company). She and other EBT dancers will perform to Mr. Vardi's music. Emerald Ballet Theatre is a non-profit organization dedicated to excellence in education, performance, and community outreach for dance and other art forms. Tickets are \$50. All proceeds go to programs that benefit special needs children participating in music, dance, and art. For more information about the benefit or programs please contact [EBTmusicdanceart@gmail.com](mailto:EBTmusicdanceart@gmail.com) or call (425) 883-3405 or (206) 236-8607. Emerald Ballet Theatre is located at 12368 Northup Way, Bellevue, WA 98005. [www.emeraldballet.org](http://www.emeraldballet.org).