

ventura

FINE LIVING IN VENTURA monthly

2009 TRAILBLAZERS

9 locals and the paths they forge

BACK TO ROOTS

The future of Community Supported Agriculture

GENERATION NEXT

Ventura's "Imagine That!" reassesses family time.

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TALKING TABOOS:

Dr. Adina Nack shouts where others whisper, using a sociological perspective to discuss taboo topics. See page 31.

9 FOR 2009

Don't look behind you. It's dark back there. But there's light ahead, and that's what these young people represent—forward movement within our community. Looking into 2009, what do you see? We see open road with a lot of dangerous curves fading behind. And that's the direction these nine lives are heading. Culture still thrives in Ventura County—in dance and theater and all forms of art—albeit less profitable for the time being. Young entrepreneurs are rising from the rubble of a wounded economy. Education and volunteerism continue to flourish. And as we welcome the first vibrant, young president since Kennedy in '61, we enter into a level of universal dialogue unlike anything that could have been imagined in the sixties, thanks to the Internet. It takes time to rebuild a broken house. Meanwhile we live amidst the detritus of a construction zone. And people like your neighbors on the pages ahead just keep moving. And the world will catch up. Perhaps in 2009.

Photo by Lynda Ruster



NATALIE GRAHAM BALLET BELLE, FILLMORE

According to pediatric experts, a *normal* four-year-old "enjoys making loud noises." Appreciation of Tchaikovsky comes later—for Fillmore's Natalie Graham, a full decade later. Which doesn't seem terribly strange until you realize that Natalie Graham is only 14. A student at Ballet Academy Ventura since she was four, Graham played a lead role as Clara in the Ventura County Ballet Company's production of *The Nutcracker* this fall and has all the markings of a future star. "I'm just kind of keeping my options open right now, working hard at what I do and then we'll see where the future takes me," she says. Keeping her options open—at the age of 14? Graham's natural poise lends itself perfectly to the flow and grace of classical ballet. And with her family's support, this rising star seems destined for greatness in the performing arts. "It's a little girl's dream to be a ballerina," she says in a soft voice, sounding for a moment like any other young teen. "I think my parents just kind of realized that I really wanted to do it."

See BalletAcademyVentura.com