

# DanceTeacher®

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## Tale as Old as Time

As we head toward 2012, longtime studio owners take a moment to reflect on their success. **BY RACHEL ZAR**

A good sign of a strong studio is one that lasts—consistently bringing in students despite hard times, the changing dance industry and a failing economy. *DT* talked to studio owners whose businesses have stood the test of time and asked for the secrets to their longevity.

### PAULETTE HARWOOD

Paulette's Ballet Studio  
(250-300 students)  
Needham, MA

Years open: 52

"I danced on Broadway for 10 years and just loved it, and I wanted my daughters to love dancing like I did. So I started my studio very selfishly to teach my own girls, Pauline, Paula and Paulette, Jr. (I'd married a Paul). They all grew up in the school, learned to teach from me and went on to dance professionally. I'm a lucky mom.

"To celebrate our 50th anniversary, my daughters went behind my back and got in touch with students from all over the country who had been with the studio since my first year. They all came back and performed dances that they'd learned when they were dancing with me! I could hardly see it through the tears in my eyes. And my daughters, who hadn't performed together since their high school days, danced for me. Seeing the three of them made my heart sing. It was kind of a love fest. I don't know how else to put it."



Five decades of Paulette Harwood's students surprised her with an anniversary celebration.