

FORT COLLINS COLORADOAN



Kent Meireis/The Coloradoan

TALENT COACH: Talent coach Peter Sklar of New York City, right, watches a performance during a talent search Saturday

at the Fort Collins Marriott Ballroom as Karen Lesser takes notes on the contestants.

Kids strut for talent developer

By ROBERT DAVIS
The Coloradoan

Fort Collins' young stars hit the stage Saturday in hopes of being discovered by a New York talent coach.

Some of the young hopefuls had worked diligently to craft their talent, while others couldn't help but be good.

However, they all shared the same desire to be picked as the one to go to New York this summer to study the arts.

Peter Sklar, New York talent scout, will pay the way for one of the participants to go to New York and study performing arts during his summer camp. Three times a year he holds a camp to teach children to better tap their singing and acting talents.

One of the local naturals was Dana Kurtz.

When asked what she wants to be when she grows up, the 4-year-old will give answers as diverse as her act. Dana sang a mix of fun kids' songs, including "The Good Ship Lollipop."

"She's got a lot of different ambitions," said Pam Kurtz, after her daughter emerged from the spotlight. "She wants to be in a commercial or movie or something."

After singing for Sklar at the Marriott Hotel, 350 E. Horsetooth Road, the budding star bounced off the furniture.

"She's always like this," her mother said. "And she's excited."

What will this child do with all this energy?

"I would like to be a pilot," she said, sliding off a sofa and spinning on the black toes of her dancing shoes. "I want to fly with my daddy when I grow up."

Her father is a private pilot in Fort Collins.

When asked which she likes best, dancing or singing, Dana was smart.

"Dance and sing," she said.

"Can't you tell," said her mother, as Dana bounced around smiling and laughing.

The only thing that grabbed the girl's attention for more than a brief moment was a tap dance team warming up on the lobby carpet.

Lisa Price, 17, of Rocky Mountain High School, and Breanna Backer, 14, of Denver, kicked and twirled in the lobby.

Just minutes before they were to get their chance on stage, their yellow sequin blouses and Converse high-top tap shoes hypnotized young Dana.

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High hopes for Hollywood



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SHOWBIZ DREAMS: Dana Kurtz, 4, of Fort Collins sings "Good Ship Lollipop" for talent coach Peter Sklar during a talent seminar Saturday at the Marriott Ballroom. See story, Page B1.

Talent

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More than 80 kids showed up Saturday to get his advice about their natural talent. Another session was scheduled for this morning. Interested participants must be at the Marriott by 9 a.m., said Elaine Cole, an organizer.

With his stocking feet propped up on a table, Sklar made notes on Saturday's performers. He laughed at some funny lines.

He sat still and silent while other kids bombed.

Deanna Lynn told jokes during her "Dumb Blonde Act," but got few laughs.

She, the 17-year-old Rocky Mountain High School student, was effusive about her performance.

"I thought I did OK," she said. Sklar will decide who gets the scholarship before he leaves Monday, Cole said.