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JUL/AUG 2011

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Final 2011 Iowa
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MEMBER MAGAZINE FOR THE POLK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

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Cover Photo Taken by Brian Triplett: Mt. Everest L-R: Justin Anderson, Theresa Britt, Lynne Vestal and Trace Kendig with Dr. Richard Deming on a precarious cliff hike to Mt. Everest base camp.

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A New Kind of adversity

By: Brian Triplett



Leukemia cancer survivor, Brandon Sickler of Des Moines, takes a moment to himself to absorb the beauty of the tallest mountains on the planet - the Himalayas.

As we wearily reached the end of the earth, or the closest I've ever come to it at least, dotted with a strange carnival of blue and yellow tents constructed pristinely atop a snowy glacier Mt. Everest and the tallest mountains in the world blocking any way out except the path we came in on, Kathy Wennihan one of 13 cancer survivors from Iowa, crumbled onto the jagged rocks. The

51-year-old patient care technician, who lacks full use of her left arm due to sarcoma and the ensuing treatments, fell just ten feet from the tent that was filled with her new friends and hot drinks at Mt. Everest base camp. The shelter marked the finish line of a nine-day trek and symbolized the main reason she and the others had traveled to Nepal. Of course, they'd have to hike back

“Fix-me-itis”



John Zittergruen, D.O.

Summer months remind me of the “fix-me-itis” syndrome many of my patients suffer from. They have this “fix me at any cost”

mind set. They want to turn back the clock. After all they hear about botox, Rogaine, and plastic surgery to nip, tuck, and lift. Media ads tell us there are pills to slim down, help us sleep, eliminate joint aches, reduce acid reflux, and increase sexual pleasure.

We are becoming a nation of bum knees, worn-out hips, and sore shoulders, and it's not just the Medicare set. Research shows knee replacement surgeries have doubled over the last decade and more than tripled in the 45-64 age group. It's not all due to obesity. Ironically, trying to stay fit and avoid the extra pounds is taking a toll.

Baby boomers bones and joints are taking a pounding. They are the first generation trying to stay active in droves on an aging frame and are less willing to use a cane or put up with pain and stiffness like their grandparents did.

Joint replacements have allowed millions of people to lead better lives, and surgeons are increasingly comfortable offering them to younger people.

Being active is the closest thing to the fountain of youth, but most people need to modify their exercise habits. Experts recommend:

1. Cross training
2. Balance routines to build strength, flexibility, core muscles, and cardiovascular health.
3. Lose weight
4. Spend more time warming up
5. Let muscles and joints recover between workouts

Following those simple guidelines and being realistic about what our aging bodies can and can't do will help cure “fix-me-itis”.

I hope you all enjoy your summer on your aging frame.

Polk County Medical Society

“Legislative Report”

July 2011



John Cacciatore

The 2011 session of the Iowa Legislature concluded on June 30th, the 172nd day of the session. It was the third longest session in the history of the state, due in large part to disagreement over state budgets. The Legislature was scheduled to adjourn on April 29th.

The Health and Human Services Appropriations Bill, HF 649, was the last bill passed on June 30th. The Polk County Medical Society has many interests in this bill most notably Medicaid funding and reimbursement rates, and improvements to the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program.

Medicaid Funding

The Legislature's Medicaid budget for this year replaces last year's temporary federal financial support with state revenues. The Medicaid budget is fully funded to meet demand at the lowest level projected. Medicaid provider reimbursement rates are maintained at current levels.

Volunteer Physician Network

The Volunteer Physician Network (VPN)



Justin Hupfer, J.D.

administered by PCMS has been a resounding success. The VPN provided 1748 Specialty Care referrals for free health care for Iowans in 2010. State funding for the referral services was maintained. PCMS secured language to maximize the funding for referral services.

PCMS worked with legislators to pass legislation that recognizes the continuum of care in the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program (VHCPP). With HF 649, hospitals that sign up to be in the VHCPP will now be indemnified by the State when physicians are providing free care to their VHCPP patients. The Iowa Medical Society and the Iowa Hospital Association joined PCMS in supporting this legislation.

Mental Health Reform Started

Redesigning the state's mental health system was a high priority for the Legislature this year. By passing SF 525, the legislature took the first step this session to develop a process to remake the system by 2013. SF 525 lays out legislative intent to redesign the mental health system to do the following:

- Shift the counties' Medicaid responsibility

for adult disability services to the State, including expenses for the state resource centers;

- Reorganize the non-Medicaid covered services so that they are administered on a regional basis that provides multiple points of access to Medicaid and non-Medicaid provided services;
- Replace legal settlement as the basis for determining financial responsibility for publicly funded disability services by determining the responsibility based upon residency;
- Meeting the needs of consumers for disability services in a responsive and cost-effective manner.

A Legislative Interim Committee is requested for the 2011 interim regarding mental health and disability services. The committee will be made up of an equal number of legislators from both parties. The committee is directed to propose legislation regarding the recommendations and proposal of the workgroups. Specifically, the committee is charged with:

- Addressing the property tax issues;
- Devising a means of ensuring the state maintains its funding commitments for the redesigned services system;
- Revising requirements for mental health professionals who are engaged in the involuntary commitment and examination processes;
- Recommending revisions to the changes made in Chapter 230A (Community Mental Health Centers) so that the changes conform to the proposals made by the interim committee;
- Developing legislation for amending the Iowa Code references to mental retardation to use intellectual disabilities;
- Considering issues posed by the July 1, 2013, repeal of county disability services administration and funding provisions already enacted in Senate File 209. In addressing the repeal provisions, the committee must consider all funding

options for funding adult disability services.

The mental health reform legislation directs DHS to create advisory workgroups to the Legislative Interim Committee. The workgroups will be made up of stakeholders, including consumers, providers, county representatives, county supervisors, and advocates. The membership of the workgroups must provide adequate representation of urban and rural interests. PCMS suggested to DHS a participant for the mental health workgroup. The workgroup reports are due back to the Legislative Interim Committee by December 9, 2011. Separate workgroups will be created to address the following issues:

1. Adult mental health (MH) system redesign
2. Adult intellectual disabilities (ID) and other developmental disabilities (DD) system redesign
3. Children's disability services
4. Co-occurring mental health, intellectual disability, or substance abuse disorders
5. Brain injury services
6. Regional administrative entities

Tort Reform

PCMS supported the Iowa Medical Society legislation on Certificate of Merit HF-490 that requires a plaintiff to certify with a medical expert that a malpractice claim against a physician has merit. The Certificate of Merit is designed to help prevent frivolous lawsuits. This bill passed the House but died in a Senate subcommittee.

Scope of Practice

There were a number of efforts by non-medical providers to expand their scope of practice into areas of medicine. Particularly noteworthy are the following:

Legislation allowing an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP) to sign a death certificate – HF 393. Despite objections

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Volunteer Physician Network “Advisory Committee”



L-R: Amy Nath, Mercy Physician Billing, Vicki Hertko, Lakeview Surgery Center, Sandy Nicholson, Iowa Heart Center, Mark Purtle, M.D., VPN Medical Director, Nicci Dean, VPN Administrator, Carmen Hutch and Claudia Hernandez, Polk County Health Department, Rob Heen, Iowa Clinic, Rachel Thompson, Primary Health Care.

The Volunteer Physician Network Advisory Committee met June 21, 2011. The committee members who attended include representatives from large specialty groups, hospitals, financial departments, surgery centers, referring clinics and the VPN Medical Director and VPN staff. The VPN Advisory Committee was updated on the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Volunteer Health Care Provider Program

(VHCPP). The VHCPP is a state wide program available to specialty offices and individual specialists who want to be indemnified by the state of Iowa when providing free care to the uninsured. The VHCPP has limited funding to process applications and the VPN encourages doctors interested to register at the VHCPP website listed below: http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hpcdp/volunteer_healthcare_provider_program.asp

In Memory of **James W. Hepplewhite III M.D.**



A Farewell Tribute

James W. Hepplewhite III M.D., practiced medicine most of his life in Des Moines. He passed away peacefully in May of natural causes. He was born on June 29, 1921 and married Helen Louise Boyd on June 18, 1950.

He graduated from East Liverpool High School, East Liverpool, Ohio, Syracuse University College of Medicine, Syracuse, New York, and a residency at Huron Road Hospital, East Cleveland, Ohio.

Over the years Dr. Hepplewhite was a medical officer in the 82nd Airborne infantry during the Korean War and a reader and member of the Board of IRIS (Iowa Radio Reading Information Service for the Blind and Print Handicapped).

He is survived by his wife, Helen, his children, Carol, Daniel, and David, his daughters-in-law, Anne-Marie and Nancy.



Congratulations to Matthew C. Brown, M.D., who was featured in the **Des Moines Register** Central Iowa Networking section on May 20 in the column, You Should Get To Know.



Congratulations to Richard L. Deming, M.D., who received the 2011 American Cancer Society Lane W. Adams Quality of Life Award, a prestigious national prize for cancer care giving.



Congratulations to David E. Drake, D.O., who was featured in the **Des Moines Register** on June 5 as a physician specializing in family psychiatry dealing with patients who have inadequate or no health insurance that deserve competent and comprehensive health care including mental health.

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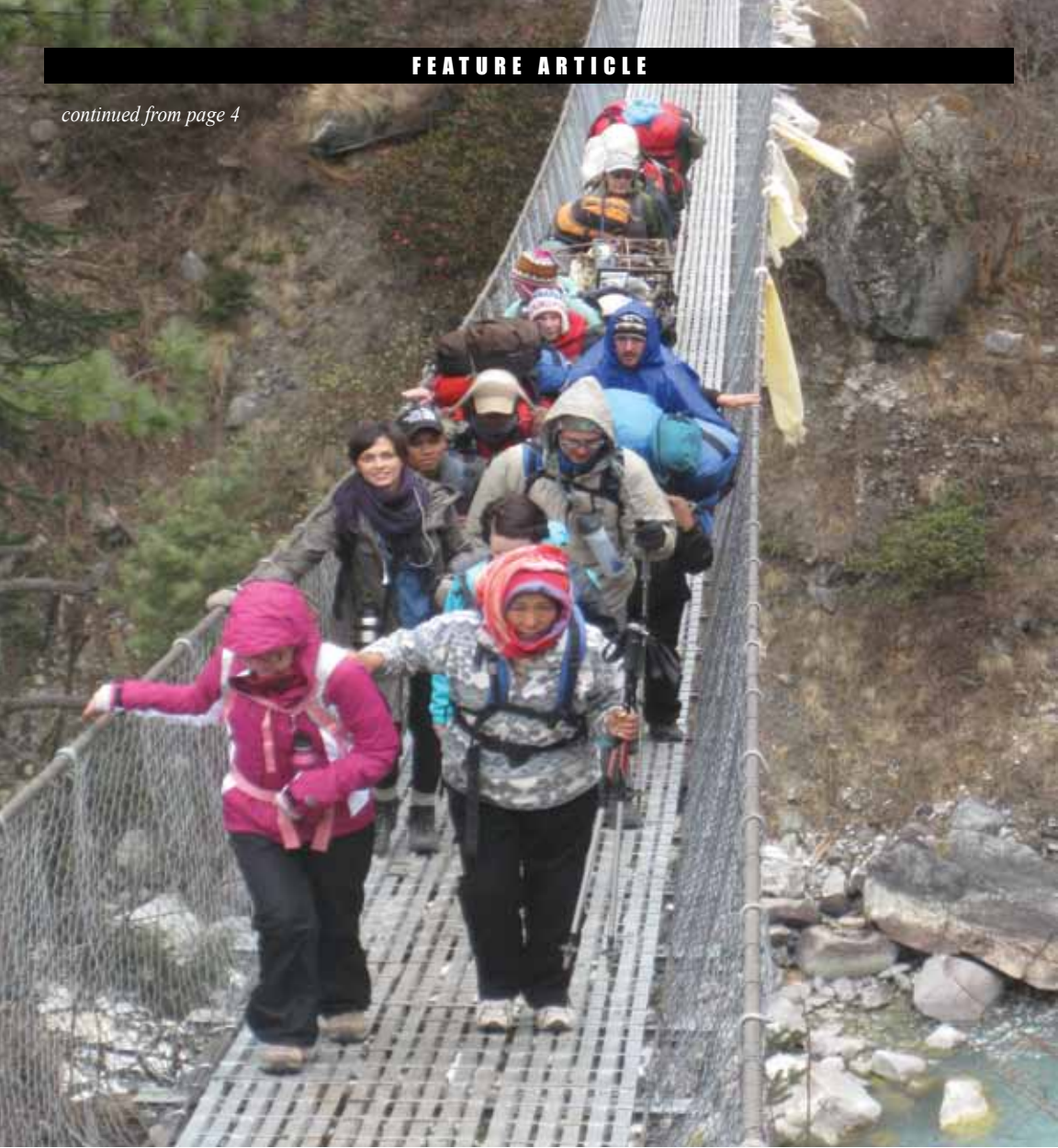
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Kathy Wennihan, with the help of a Sherpa, leads her fellow group of cancer survivors across a foot bridge on a rainy day on the trek to Mt. Everest base camp.

down beginning the next morning, but they were living for the moment, and that wasn't part of it yet.

Dr. Richard Deming, Medical Director of the LiveStrong YMCA program organized and led the expedition. Deming, who is the Medical Director of Mercy Cancer Center

in Des Moines, instructs a Wednesday evening spin class bookended by a speaker series and smoothies for fellowship, which he incorporated into this YMCA program, which offers a free 12-week membership to cancer survivors who range from ages 27-64. They include a high school principal, a truck driver, a police officer and a musician.



Brain cancer survivor, Justin Anderson of Clear Lake, shows proudly that he successfully reached Mt. Everest base camp at 17,600 feet after nine days of hiking.

The type of cancer battled includes prostate, tonsil, brain, breast, sarcoma, Hodgkin's and leukemia. More than half of the participants of the 18-day round trip endeavor learned of the opportunity through Dr. Deming.

The 57-year-old oncologist had been inspired by a previous trip to Nepal, and after talks with local adventurer, Charlie Wittmack who summited Everest for a second time this year as the final leg of his World Triathlon, the two conceived the idea to bring a group of cancer survivors to the base camp to not only celebrate their survivorship, but also to take on a challenge with the mindset that adversity leads to personal growth.

Months of physical endurance training as a participant of the LiveStrong at the YMCA program at the Healthy Living Center in Des Moines, Iowa, had gotten Wennihan this far. The bonds formed with her team members

during preparation and the countless steps on the trail took her the remaining few steps as she was lifted to her feet by more caretakers than necessary who guided her inside the safe haven. There she silently celebrated by sipping tea and hugging those who had made the same journey combining grueling challenge and unprecedented accomplishment.

"This was the most difficult thing I have ever done," Wennihan said from her Iowa home, having returned on April 25. "Beating cancer was nothing compared to what we all did. I am still trying to take it all in. I still find myself in tears when I think about it."

Others in the group, some who had just finished chemo or radiation treatments or gotten a clean scan days before stepping onto a flight bound for Kathmandu on April 6, reached the base camp at 17,600 feet with

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Dr. Richard Deming and the group of 14 cancer survivors he brought to Nepal for a trek to Mt. Everest base camp perform yoga before another day's hike under the guidance of instructor Tomoko Yajima, who teaches yoga at the Healthy Living Center in Clive.

tears bouncing off their down jackets and faces that told of their trials and tribulations on the trail. All but one of the 14 cancer survivors made it to the destination.

Even though the vast Himalayas can be isolating land, no one was alone.

"When you were at a low, there was always someone to lend a hand, hug, smile and laugh," said 28-year-old Emelia Chadwick, who was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 25. "I would still be sitting on that rock on the incline if it was not for an encouragement from a teammate."

"I really think that it's going to make a huge change in the lives of everyone who went on this trek," Deming said once the group had successfully returned to Kathmandu.

For 27-year-old Justin Anderson, who was

diagnosed with a brain tumor last year, the experience made him realize more than anything else to trust his body again.

"To see all of us get up and be able to physically do what we did every day climbing the mountain was a revelation to me. It taught me how strong my body is and that it has the ability to fight through sickness and weakness. It taught me that if I believe in myself, I can be a lean, mean, cancer fighting machine."

When I met the individuals during weekend hiking sessions, weekday yoga, weight training or spin sessions and at their homes for stories leading up to takeoff in Iowa, I could sense the eagerness building. But in retrospect, no one knew what we were in for. When dealing with the future, we usually only imagine the sense of sight. As we trekked through the Himalayas for two



Breast cancer survivor, Theresa Britt of Ankeny, hugs Dr. Richard Deming upon seeing Mt. Everest with her own eyes for the first time.

weeks, the sounds, the smells, the tastes and the feelings captured us. The universe owned us, and we were just fine with that. Ten of the 14 survivors had never left the continent before, so this allowed usage of the cliché “trip of a lifetime” to be completely acceptable.

On the journey into the mountains, you must take a tiny airplane into the landing strip in Lukla – one of the steepest and shortest runways in the world. As the group departed from the tiny village with no roads where everything is transported on backs and yaks, breast cancer survivor Karen Parman pulled

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Dr. Richard Deming, Medical Director of Mercy Cancer Center in Des Moines who led and organized 'Above & Beyond: Cancer Survivors Trek to Everest,' teaches the group about balance on a sunny day on the trail.



Breast cancer survivor, Peggy Scott of Adel, starts out her morning at Mt. Everest base camp with a wide smile.



Dr. Dick Deming took this photo of cancer survivor Brandon Sickler standing with author of article Brian Triplett and Dr. Rick Rinehart in front of the Khumbu Glacier at Mt. Everest base camp.

out a pen and wrote a note to herself on her hand.

"From now on, I push past the fear of failure or of the unknown and I do hard things."

Though Parman admitted many aspects of the trip scared her, she learned to fight against the security of sameness.

"The pay off was an epiphany," she said.

Brian Triplett, freelance writer Iowa City, IA
www.theworlddtri.com

“Pets in the Medical Office Barking up the right tree?”

By: David E. Drake, D.O.



Nearly two years ago, I tried an experiment. I brought our family dog, Lucy, a black Lab mix, into my private practice office. The original intention was simple enough. My wife, Claire, would leave her law practice every day to come home to let Lucy out over the noon hour. It seemed like wasted time and travel. When Lucy first visited my office, after hours, she was quite rambunctious – running and exploring every nook in the place.

When I first exposed Lucy to the folks I see in my office for psychotherapy, I was quite surprised and relieved. Lucy immediately took to whoever came in the door, after an initial barking and sniffing out. Then, after days and weeks, she eventually greatly settled down, now sitting at the feet of whoever I am working with, while they pet her throughout the session. And now with her antics she is good for several laughs every hour.

With small children I closely supervise Lucy but so far she has never snapped at or growled towards anyone. Her disposition is such that I wonder if the other half of the Lab mix is perhaps Golden Retriever. With new patients to my practice I have to warn them that if she growls, it's not because she is mean, but because she wants them to pet her or continue to pet her. I do have to warn women with purses not to leave their purses un-opened on the floor as Lucy has a penchant for tissues and dollar bills!

Lucy loves to get treats and I typically give treats to the folks I am talking with for them to give to Lucy. It creates an instant bond that both obviously enjoy. And once folks get used to having Lucy in on their sessions, they

will ask where she is if she happens to be in the front office or on the rare days when she stays at home.

In another medical practice, that of our colleague and geriatrician, Bob Bender, MD, he tells me that 'Tucker' is a real hit with patients and staff in his office. Bob began bringing his 'Westie', a West Highland Terrier, into his office two years ago. Patients will actually call to find out when Tucker is in the office so they can overlap their appointments with Tucker's 3 days a week at The Orr Center. Tucker will come into the exam room and do a 'pet scan' and then go over in the corner and sleep. Bob's patients will talk about their own dogs and other pets. Tucker is an "unconditional friend and source of solace to everybody." Bob's advice is to make sure your pet is gentle and calm and that his own dog "doesn't like herky-jerky children." Staff at Bob's office "love him!" and Tucker even receives "anonymous fan letters."

Research has shown that for humans if we are petting a cat or a dog that our pulse and blood pressure goes down. Pets can have a calming effect on us, as the physicians and other health care providers, as well as our staff. So....in an age of increasing technology and decreased time with patients, a pet can do a lot to bring some welcome laughter and smiles to patients and staff – a little sense of home in the professional setting. I recommend it!

David E. Drake, D.O., family and relationship consultant in psychiatry.

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by many physician organizations, including PCMS, this legislation passed and was signed by the Governor.

An effort by Naturopathic Practitioners to be recognized as licensed by the Board of Medicine – SF 293. Many medical organizations, including PCMS, opposed this legislation since the science regarding naturopathic practice has not been determined to be medicine. The bill died on the Senate floor and was sent back to committee.

Lay midwives sought a separate licensing procedure – SF 484. Patient safety is a primary mission of PCMS and the state officially sanctioning a practice that many consider unsafe is a concern. PCMS and other medical provider organizations opposed this effort to license a practice many consider to be unsafe. The bill died on the Senate floor and was sent back to committee.

Legislation was passed and signed by the Governor allowing the DOT to accept reports from ARNPs and Physician Assistants disclosing a physical or mental condition that

renders a person incompetent to operate a motor vehicle – SF 149. The final determination is made by medical staff.

Other Issues

A bill allowing discovery in a criminal case of privileged mental health records, SF 291, was passed and signed by the Governor. PCMS and many medical and law enforcement organizations supported this legislation.

As of this writing, the Governor had not taken action on HF 649, the Health and Human Services Appropriation Bill or SF 525, the Mental Health Reform bill. The Governor has until July 30th to take action on these bills.

Although the legislature is adjourned until January of 2012, there will be interim work conducted and meetings held impacting health care policy. We will monitor that activity and keep PCMS apprised of pertinent information.

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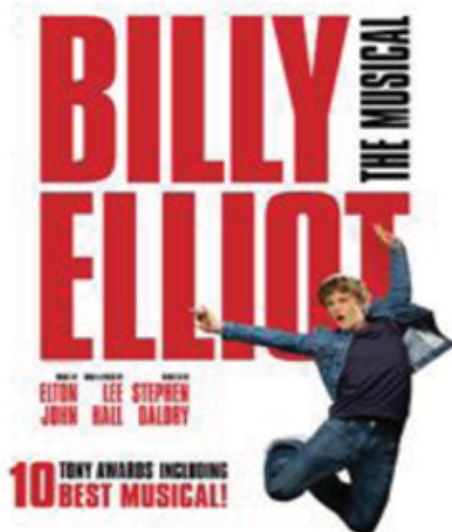
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—THE NEW YORK TIMES



BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL is the joyous celebration of one boy's journey to make his dreams come true. Set in a small town, the story follows Billy as he stumbles out of the boxing ring and into a ballet class, discovering a surprising passion that inspires his family and his whole community. A big musical with an even bigger heart, **BILLY ELLIOT** will enchant the dreamer in all of us. Based on the international smash-hit film, **BILLY ELLIOT** is brought to life by a phenomenal cast of 45 and the Tony Award-winning creative team -- director Stephen Daldry, choreographer Peter Darling and writer Lee Hall -- along with music legend Elton John, who has written what the *New York Post* calls "HIS BEST SCORE YET!"

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