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Harford Ballet Company Presents *The Nutcracker*

Bel Air, MD (October 4, 2010) –The magic of the holiday season will be brought to life as Harford Ballet Company presents its performances of *The Nutcracker*, taking place December 4, 2010 at 6 p.m. and December 5, 2010 at 1 p.m. at Patterson Mill High School in Bel Air.

Harford Ballet Company, northern Maryland's first and only professional ballet company is proud to perform this classic production for the 11th year. The company's professional division is in its second season and along with breathtaking technique and artistry, the enchanting story of *The Nutcracker* is sure to charm young and old audiences alike.

A timeless tradition for the entire family, Harford Ballet Company's *The Nutcracker* will captivate audiences with the story of Clara and her Nutcracker Prince as they battle the evil Rat King in a sword duel and travel to the enchanted *Land of the Sweets*. The beautiful Tchaikovsky score is easily recognized by all audience members and when combined with exquisite costumes, splendid scenery and radiant choreography, the experience will be one that is not forgotten. This year's performances will feature special guests Abi Stafford and Adam Hendrickson from the New York City Ballet.

"The dancing, the atmosphere – it all comes together to create an unforgettable outing to the theater and truly helps anyone get in the holiday spirit," said Executive Director Pamela Villeneuve. "*The Nutcracker* is such a magical journey and Harford Ballet Company is delighted in continuing to bring the production to Northern Maryland."

During the party scene in Act I, young guests are invited onstage to sit with Clara and experience Uncle Drosselmeyer's magic up close. Children are also invited to bring a donation of a new and unopened children's gift onstage to place under Clara's tree for the Aegis Empty Stocking Fund. For more than 75 years, the Empty Stocking Fund has been helping to provide a brighter holiday season to underprivileged children throughout Harford County. The Harford Ballet Company is grateful to take part in such a wonderful cause.

Following each performance, the Harford Ballet Company will host the Gala Nutcracker Tea Party*. Guests will have an opportunity to meet Clara, the Nutcracker Prince, the Sugar Plum Fairy and several other characters from the show in a magical atmosphere

similar to the performance. Children will have the opportunity to have photographs taken with the ballet's characters and receive autographs from their favorite performers. Refreshments will include holiday cookies and treats as well as freshly brewed tea and coffee.

Tickets go on sale October 15, 2010 and can be purchased at our website: www.harfordballetcompany.org or by calling 410-877-0777. Ticket prices range from \$17-\$23 with advance purchase and \$25 at the door.

*Tea Party tickets are \$7, advance purchases only.

Harford Ballet Company's *The Nutcracker* is sponsored by Comcast and supported in part by both the Maryland State Arts Council and Harford County Cultural Arts Board.

About Harford Ballet Company

Harford Ballet Company is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization overseen by an advisory Board of Directors who work with the artistic director and the company manager to provide administrative support for the Company. The Company's annual season features two programs of classic favorites and new works, including the holiday tradition, *The Nutcracker*.

Harford Ballet Company receives state arts funding through a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council and the Harford County Cultural Arts Board and constantly seeks financial backing for the valuable art of ballet through memberships, grants, and personal and corporate donations.

Harford Ballet Company's sponsors include Bay Area Dentists, Bel Air Auto Service, Bel Air Recreation Committee, Black and Decker, Comcast, Dental Associates, Growing Smiles Dentistry, Klein's Shoprite, Susquehanna Bank, T. Rowe Price and Union Memorial Sports Medicine.

About Dance Conservatory of Maryland

Founded in 1996 by Pamela Villeneuve, Dance Conservatory of Maryland is the premier classical and contemporary dance program in Harford County and the Northern Maryland region. Headquartered at the 40-acre historic Millstad property on Whitaker Mill Road, three miles south of Bel Air, the 5,000 square foot facility houses the conservatory as well as the headquarters for Ballet Maryland. A DCM dancer can perform professionally, earn scholarships to major professional schools, colleges and universities, and enrich the artistic and cultural life of the community.

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