

WINNERS OF 2007 BAND CONTESTS ANNOUNCED BY CONNECTICUT VETERANS DAY PARADE

HARTFORD, CONN., November 11, 2007 – The winners of contests for Bands that performed in the 2007 “Connecticut Veterans Day Parade” have been announced. Close to 4,000 state residents marched in last Sunday, November 4’s event in Downtown Hartford, making it the largest veterans parade in all of New England.

A total of 28 bands marched in the eighth annual parade. The winners were chosen by a panel of judges and were presented with trophies. They are:

- **Best Fife and Drum: The Mattatuck Drum Band;**
- **Best Pipe and Drum: Connecticut Firefighters Pipes and Drums;**
- **Best Middle School Band: Hartford Magnet Middle School Marching Phoenix Band;**
- **Best High School Marching Band: Rockville High School Marching Ram Band and Color Guard; and**
- **Best Parade Spirit: New Britain High School Golden Hurricanes Marching Band.**

For the first time, the 2 ½ hour event **kicked off with the University of Connecticut Marching Band**, making a rare appearance in any parade. Veterans who marched or rode in the procession included those of past conflicts, as well as soldiers who recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan. Special features included fly-overs by military aircraft and a Moment of Silence when the parade paused in observance of veterans who died while serving their country. The procession concluded with a special “Gold Star Finish”, hosted by the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs to honor Gold Star Families who lost relatives in combat.

The annual Connecticut Veterans Day Parade is organized by a collaboration of veterans’ groups, corporations, local municipalities, businesses and civic organizations, and is administered by the Greater Hartford Arts Council. The Connecticut National Guard manages all parade logistics, and the City of Hartford hosts the event. For more information about the annual “*Connecticut Veterans Day Parade*” visit www.ctveteransdayparade.org or call (860) 724-2649 ext. 23.

Descriptions of the winning bands:

Best Fife and Drum: The Mattatuck Drum Band – This senior ancient band is the oldest fife and drum band in the U.S., with continuous membership since it was organized in 1767. Its members seek to perpetuate the music, traditions and heritage of the founders of the State and Country. The Band was organized in Farmingbury Conn., which later became the Town of Wolcott. Its purpose was to provide martial music for the Farmingbury Parish Militia, and it later became known as the Wolcott Drum Band. When the unit moved to Waterbury in 1881, its name changed to the Mattatuck Drum Band.

Best Pipe and Drum: the Connecticut Firefighters Pipes and Drums – Founded in November of 1992 for the purpose of maintaining and furthering the tradition of pipes and drums in the fire service, the band is dedicated to the Connecticut Fire Service as a ceremonial band performing at “Line of Duty” firefighters’ funerals, memorial services, and other fire service-related events.

Best Middle School: Hartford Magnet Middle School Marching Phoenix Band – Led by Band Director Kelly Savoie, this award-winning band is made up of 80 seventh and eighth grade students on wind and percussion instruments, with dancers and flags showcased in the front and back of the band.

Best High School Band: Rockville High School Marching Ram Band and Color Guard. This band led into the parade’s Gold Star Finish (to honor families who lost loved ones in combat), under the direction of Darcy Davis.

Best Parade Spirit: Ladies New Britain High School Golden Hurricanes Marching Band. Known throughout the state for their unique marching band style and military precision, this band was established more than 60 years ago. They have played for every U.S. major president.

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