

RIDGEWOOD HS MARCHING BAND CHAMPIONSHIP REUNION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Alumni of Ridgewood HS Marching Band
Celebrate Championship Anniversaries**

(Ridgewood, NJ) On Friday, October 13, members of the 1992 and 1997 Ridgewood High School Marching Bands will return to RHS as they celebrate the 25th and 20th anniversaries of their Championship seasons. The bands will be recognized in a halftime ceremony at the home football game as the Maroons take on Bergen Tech. Game time is 6:00PM and halftime is expected to begin at approximately 6:45PM. Following the football game, the band alumni will congregate at MacMurphy's Pub in Ridgewood for a reception and celebration.

1992 marked the first championship title for the RHS Marching Band in its history. Led by Band Director Jeffrey Haas, the band performed an inventive, ground-breaking show titled: "1969: Looking Back, Moving Forward," which presented music that was popular during the height of the tumultuous Viet Nam war era. The show captured some of the feelings of those who supported and opposed our country's involvement in the unpopular conflict, and special effects were used to help depict a battle scene. The show began with "Aquarius" and "Happy Together" before taking a dark turn, where military marches were juxtaposed with protest songs like "We Shall Overcome" and "Give Peace a Chance." A section of original music was used during the battle scene while air raid sirens, light flashes and smoke powder filled the air of stadiums around the state. The final selection of "Bridge Over Troubled Water" brought the show to a quiet and contemplative conclusion, with the band slowly leaving the field from a peace sign formation.

During the season, the band slowly climbed from behind the pack of group III bands to the top of the list, gaining followers throughout the fall, and leading to newspaper and radio news coverage throughout the season. At the Championship event at Giants Stadium, the band was the first of twenty-two groups to perform in the competition, and maintained their lead throughout the five-hour contest.

While the band's 1997 Championship show did not include special effects or controversial subject matter, the victory was no less sweet. Growing steadily through the mid 1990s to become a larger group IV band, Ridgewood found itself in an even more competitive arena for their show titled, "Fiesta!" This show included music of a Latin American influence, opening with the resounding chords from H. Owen Reed's "La Fiesta Mexicana," followed by Aaron Copland's "El Salon Mexico," and culminating with Clifton Williams' powerful "Symphonic Dance No. 3: Fiesta." Although still considered one of the more inventive bands in the US Scholastic Band Association, the band was now known for its powerful brass sound and its unrelenting drill movement. Unlike 1992, the 1997 group led in competition through the entirety of their competition season, and went into the Championship as slim favorites over Hunterdon Central Regional High School, who had a late season surge leading into the Championship event. But once again, Giants Stadium saw the band rise to the top and walk away with the title. Later that night, band director Jeffrey Haas was contacted by the Office of the Governor with an invitation for the band to perform at the inaugural event for Governor Christine Todd Whitman's second term, which they attended the following January.

The RHS Marching Band is one of the oldest marching bands in New Jersey, dating back to its start in 1922. The band enjoys a rich history and many revered traditions, including its cadet-style uniform and its "Benediction," which can be heard following each practice, game or competition. Mr. Haas, now in his thirtieth year as Director of Bands at Ridgewood High School, passed the leadership of the marching

band to Associate Director John Luckenbill, who has led the marching band since 2011.

Alumni of the RHS Marching Band who would like to participate in the anniversary celebration are asked to visit the band's website at www.rhsbands.org/alumni for more information and to complete an RSVP form.

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