

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Portland Marching Band Shares Lifelong Love of Music with Bahamian Students**

*Portland, Oregon – March 8, 2012* – The Beat Goes On Marching Band of Portland, Oregon traveled farther afield than usual to mark Leap Day this year – all the way to the Caribbean. On February 29, C.R. Walker Senior High School of Nassau, The Bahamas hosted the all-adult marching band, which performed in front of 1000 students at an outdoor school assembly. The show featured the band’s high-energy, brassy, rock-and-roll style with selections that ranged from Jimmy Buffett to Lady Gaga, highlighted by a joint rendition of the Pacific Northwest Anthem “Louie Louie” with the school’s band students.

The Bahamas performance follows the band’s appearance at Hillsboro Stadium last fall in front of 5000 high school musicians at the Northwest Association for the Performing Arts Marching Band Championships. “We love these opportunities to show students that there’s ‘musical life after high school,’” said Band Director and President Steve Tolopka. “By sharing our enthusiasm and the fun we’re still having playing in the band, we hope to encourage young people to stay musically active throughout their lives. And it’s even better when we get a chance to rock out side-by-side with the kids!”

Twirler Captain Patti Waitman-Ingebretsen grinned as she thought back to the Nassau show. “It was definitely a cross-cultural experience. I think everyone was surprised to see 50- and 60- and 70-year-olds in short skirts and purple sequins twirling up a storm to all these popular tunes. We may be a marching band, but that doesn’t mean we play Sousa!”

The band capped its road trip the following day with its first-ever shipboard performance. An enthusiastic cruise crowd packed the Circuit Lounge aboard Royal Caribbean’s *Monarch of the Seas*, rewarding the band with a standing ovation.

The Beat Goes On Marching Band is committed to delighting Northwest and National audiences while reliving the best parts of the marching band experiences that we fondly remember. Members range in age from 20’s to 70’s and hail primarily from the Portland metro area, though the Bahamas trip also included members from Washington, California, Ohio, and Texas. The group, which is renowned for its upbeat attitude, feel-good musical selections, and emphasis on audience interaction, has performed at numerous local venues including the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing, the world’s largest international conference for technical women.

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