

PRESS RELEASE

70th Annual Arcadia Festival of Bands – Theme: Fire up the Volunteers

The 70th Annual Arcadia Festival of Bands will take place Saturday, November 18, 2023.

Arcadia, CA – The Arcadia Festival of Bands has grown to be one of the premiere band reviews in Southern California and is the longest-running event of its kind in the whole state. This sustained success is due to the continued support provided by the City of Arcadia, the Fire and Police Departments, the Arcadia Unified School District and local businesses. The parade simply would not happen without their cooperation.

The all-day event consists of **the Band Review** starting at 9 a.m. on Duarte Road, east of Holly Avenue, with the **Dignitary Parade** leading off at 8:40 a.m. The **Percussion Festival** starts at 11:40 a.m. at Salter Stadium at Arcadia High School followed by the **Band Review Awards Ceremony** at 2:00 p.m.

The **evening field tournament** is the 6A Division Field Show Championship for the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association (SCSBOA). Currently scheduled to start at 5 p.m. at Citrus College in Glendora, CA followed by the Awards Ceremony at 8:30 p.m.

"For 70 years the Arcadia community has been coming together to help us all celebrate this program of musical excellence. Each year we build upon the past to strengthen our future" said Kevin Sherrill, Band and Percussion Director at Arcadia High School. "The Festival of Bands is a way of giving back to the community that means so much to us."

This year's parade **Grand Marshal** is **Neil Conrad**. Neil Conrad served the Arcadia Community as a Fire Captain II, for the Arcadia Fire Department, and retired after 30 years. Neil and his wife graduated from Arcadia High School as did their two children, Jeremy in 1999 and Marissa in 2001. His kids were both percussionists and he was involved in loading equipment and being a "Pit Dad." After both kids graduated, he continued to serve with the bus parking for the Arcadia Festival of Bands. He meticulously planned and designed the traffic flow and layouts for staging bands at this and other music events.

Neil's commitment goes beyond Arcadia Music Club. He was also involved with the Foothill Middle School band program, Indian Guides, AYSO soccer, and as a church youth group advisor. He also plays a major volunteer role with Fiesta Floats, supervising the decoration for one or more Rose Parade floats. Involvement can be fun too, as former teachers remember with fondness when Neil drove the Highland Oaks staff to school on Arcadia's antique fire truck for Halloween. The teachers were dressed as Dalmatians and the principal as Cruella de Vil.

The community involvement does not end with Neil. Both his kids have service jobs, Fire Service and Nursing, they coach their kids in soccer and are involved with their kids' activities. When asked about important lessons in volunteering, Neil replied: "I've noticed most people have a desire to be helpful and like to belong to something positive. People will continue to volunteer, if they feel appreciated and acknowledged. Good positive people like to be around other good positive people." Congratulations to Neil, his wife, Karen, and his family - Jeremy & Melissa Conrad, Olive & Shepard; Marissa & Ryan Kinderman, Mahlon & Elizabeth. **Firing up a family!**

Arcadia Music Club supporting the Music Program at Arcadia High School

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