

NEWS RELEASE

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NC State Homecoming Parade to Return to Hillsborough Street Friday

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Street closings for the North Carolina State University Homecoming Parade will begin at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 1, with the closing of Sullivan and Dan Allen drives. Hillsborough Street (between Dan Allen Drive and Oberlin Road) will close from 6 to 7 p.m. Pullen Road will close from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. A map showing the parade route and viewing stands is attached.

Photo opportunities of students working on floats are available this week; in addition, this year's parade will include the return of the popular Sweet Tomato Queens, graduates from the 1970s. Contact the NC State Alumni Association at 919/515-3375 for contact information on float preparation and interview availabilities.)

Chances are that many of the NC State students who take part in this year's Homecoming Parade weren't even born the last time the parade was held on Hillsborough Street.

The year was 1983. Ronald Reagan was president, the Bell System hadn't been broken up and the term "compact disc" had just entered the lexicon.

On Friday, Oct. 1, the parade returns to Hillsborough Street after 21 years away. In fact, the parade had disappeared altogether until 2001, when it was revived with a short route on campus. Now, NC State students and the Alumni Association are taking it back to Hillsborough Street with 76 parade entries, and they're teaming up with merchants to decorate storefronts for the event. Community involvement makes this parade more than a campus tradition – the public is invited and 15 local organizations and businesses, including the Hillsborough Street Partnership, are entered with floats, banners and cars.

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Other entries include NC State coaches and athletic teams, cheerleaders, the university dance team, The Power Sound of the South, Muddy from the Carolina Mudcats, student-sponsored floats, vintage cars and two emcees: Decker Ngongang (2003), vice president of the NC State Black Alumni Society, and Joe Ovies (2001), sports radio host at 850 “The Buzz.” Alumni entries this year include the return of the Sweet Tomato Queens, graduates from the 1970s.

“There will be something for everyone – students, families, people from the community,” said Kathy Hart, associate executive director of the Alumni Association. “We hope this is the rebirth of an old tradition.”

Viewing stands will be available at three locations, and collectible beads and candy will be tossed Mardi Gras-style to the crowds along the full route.

Staged on Sullivan and Dan Allen drives, the parade will begin Friday at 6 p.m. and travel Hillsborough Street to the Enterprise Street intersection.

At 8 p.m., students will pack Reynolds Coliseum for the Pack Howl pep rally and concert, where football coach Chuck Amato, men’s basketball coach Herb Sendek, and Amy Bristol of Radio Station G-105’s Showgram will lead the rally. Afterward, Grammy-nominated hip-hop artist Ludacris will headline the Pack Howl concert.

Hart said that student participation in Homecoming planning is “way up” this year. “More than 150 students have participated in planning, and some students have been working on Homecoming for 10 months,” she said. “There’s a lot of enthusiasm. Students are working with Hillsborough Street merchants to decorate storefronts. We have community groups with parade entries, so we’re hopeful that this will be the start of a great community-university annual event.”

Other activities planned for Homecoming Week include “Wear Red, Get Fed” festivities on the Brickyard, “Leader of the Pack” voting, a blood drive, receptions, a “craziest fan” contest (to be concluded at the Pack Howl Pep Rally) and tailgate reunions on game day.

Wake Forest University is this year’s Homecoming opponent. The game begins Saturday at noon. For more information about Homecoming, visit the Web at: www.alumni.ncsu.edu/homecoming.