

# 'Great night'



## Crowd enjoys Seneca homecoming parade's return to downtown

**BY NORM CANNADA**  
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — Well before the band played its first note or the floats started down Main Street, the crowds were already gathering and finding that perfect spot to watch the Seneca High School homecoming parade.

It didn't matter that homecoming and the football game had to be moved up a day because of concerns about the weather today

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Above: Members of the Seneca High School Marching Band play their way through downtown during the homecoming parade on Thursday. Left: The school's bobcat mascot waves to the crowd during the event, which made its return to downtown for the first time in seven years. Originally scheduled for today, the parade was moved up a day because of weather concerns.

PHOTOS BY CALEB GILBERT |  
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# PARADE: Returned to Main Street, Ram

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from the remnants of Hurricane Ian.

Local residents and friends were lined up all along the parade route from Main Street to Ram Cat Alley to see the first homecoming parade downtown in seven years.

Colleen Vassey was waiting on the parade with her sons, 7-year-old Flynn and 4-year-old Rowan. Flynn was having fun, but said he was more excited about his soccer game after the parade. Rowan was excited to see the SHS band.

"I just have little ones and I thought it would be fun to see the band and to see the floats," Vassey said.

A little farther up the parade route, Northside Elementary teacher Michelle Duvall was enjoying time with friends and waiting to see her kids — a Seneca High senior and a freshman — in the parade.

"I came out to support my kids and just everybody else," she said. "I'm a Seneca graduate. I think it's wonderful that we're having the parade (downtown) again. The weather's beautiful, and we get to have it on Thursday night, so we get extra people that maybe wouldn't normally come to the parade because of

Jazz on the Alley. It's just a little bit of support for our hometown."

Brooke Davis, a former teacher now working at the school district office, was nearby with her two children.

"I have two kids that I want to expose to the magic of homecoming," she said, adding she was looking forward to "the floats, seeing students, seeing the band and the cheerleaders."

"I'm here because my daughter is in the cheerleaders in the parade, and we're here to cheer on the Bobcats tonight for homecoming," Barry Duvall said.

His friend Ron Gambrell joked that he was "looking for Santa Claus."

"He's coming last in the parade," Gambrell said.

Heather Vassey said she was at the parade to "support the school in our community."

Cheryl Cabanero agreed, adding, "We're really excited that they came to downtown Seneca. We're going to watch them and eat some dinner."

Denise Robinson said she was excited about "seeing the floats."

"I have a daughter that goes to Northside, and we're just supporting the Seneca community," she said.

Brandy Hall Greenlee, who graduated from SHS in 1998, was on Main Street with her mother,



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**Seneca Police Chief Casey Bowling estimated that about 700 people turned out Thursday to watch the Seneca High School homecoming parade downtown.**

Leora Hall. They said they were both excited that Greenlee's son and Hall's grandson, Devon Lewis, was in the parade as a member of the football team.

Greenlee remembered being a member of band's color guard when she was at Seneca High, calling the parade "a Bobcat tradition."

Hall did not hesitate when asked why she came to the parade.

"I'm here to represent my grandson," she said. "He's a football player. I'm looking forward to seeing them all (parade entries)."

Seneca Police Chief Casey

## Cat for first time in 7 years



Bowling estimated the crowd at around 700.

Mayor Dan Alexander said he was pleased with the event.

"It's a great night," he said. "The wind died down a little bit tonight. Lots of young people are out here."

"It's fun to have it back downtown," he added. "I hope everybody can come in and enjoy the businesses. It's just a great, great place to have it. To me, it just makes it more special."