

Catalina Foothills teen wins kudos, mention of school on parade airing

By Andrea Rivera
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

A Catalina Foothills High School junior was recognized on national television for winning a \$5,000 scholarship during Thursday morning's broadcast of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Maku Wood, 16, and hundreds of other members of the Falcon Marching Band were among 11 marching bands taking part in the annual parade in Manhattan.



Maku Wood received Bob Hope scholarship.

On NBC, the parade's announcer said the band raised \$350,000 to go to the event by holding car washes and selling frozen dough.

Wood, who plays the snare drum, found out she won the Bob Hope Band Scholarship Award during a reception for drum majors and band directors in New York City on Tuesday.

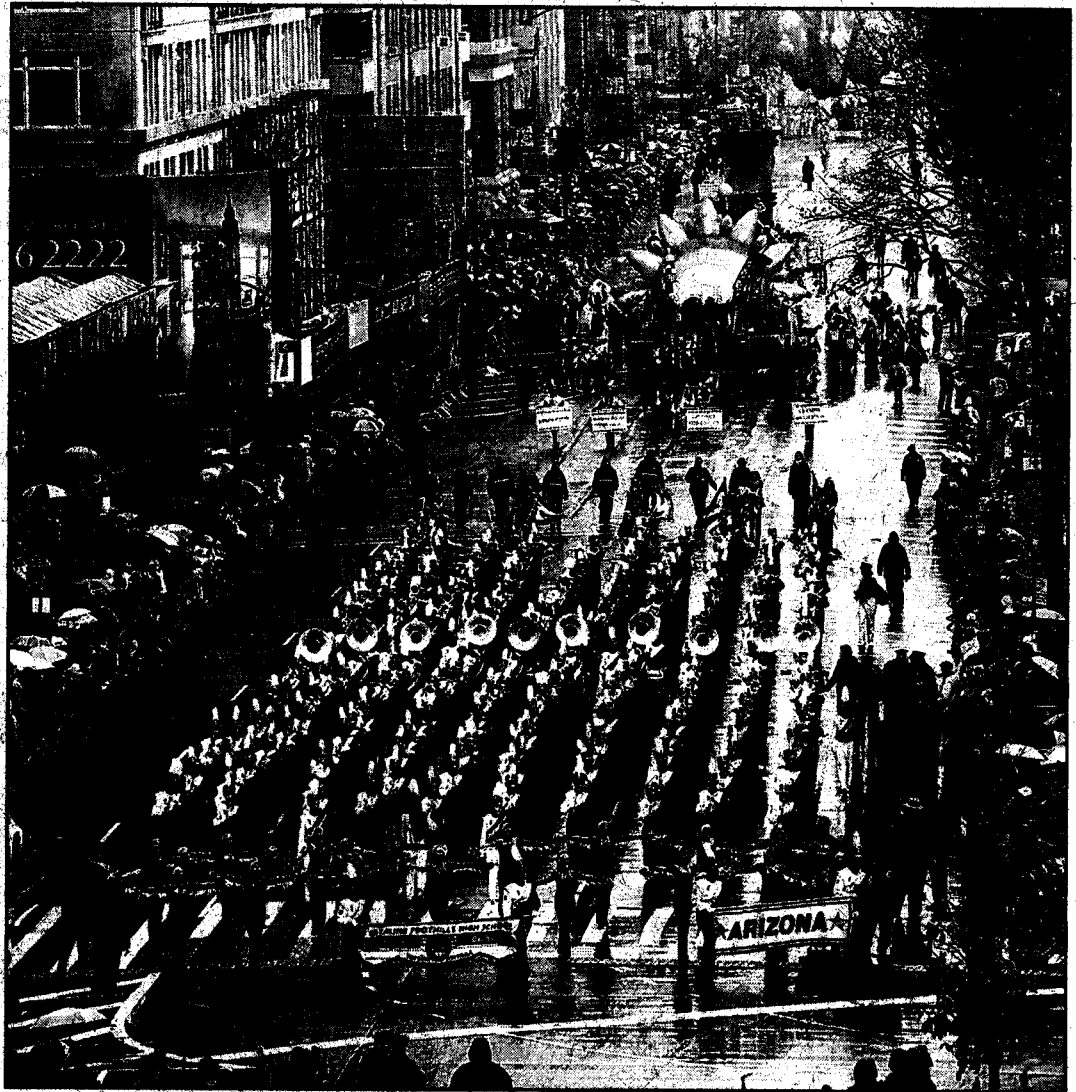
The award recognizes one outstanding band member participating in the parade and the scholarship winner's band program.

The Catalina Foothills band — the first Tucson-area high school band ever to march in the parade — also receives \$5,000 because of Wood's effort.

To be eligible for the prize, Wood was required to submit an essay about why she thought she was like legendary comedian Bob Hope, who died in 2003 at the age of 100.

"I thought it was a pretty good essay because it was different," Wood said by cell phone from aboard a dinner cruise Thursday. "I wasn't sure if I was going to win."

It took Wood a week to write



COURTESY OF WWW.GROUPPHOTOS.COM

The Catalina Foothills band was the first Tucson-area high school band ever to march in the Macy's parade.

the essay after tossing out her first couple of drafts, which she thought would not stand out among the other entries.

In her winning essay, Wood wrote about an imaginary round of golf she played with Hope, an avid golfer. On the course, the two discussed each of the holes, which represented a metaphor for either leadership, musicianship or community service, she said.

"I read through many drafts, but the final one really made me cry," said Wood's mother, Debbie Wood.

Maku Wood's parents didn't attend the parade, but they watched their daughter on television from Tucson.

"It was an unbelievable experience," Debbie Wood said. "We were absolutely elated."

Though the weather for the

parade was wet and cold, Wood said marching in the high-profile event and being in New York City were exciting.

"New York City is just huge. Everything goes up," she said about the skyscrapers. "In Tucson, it's urban sprawl."

• Contact reporter Andrea Rivera at 806-7737 or arivera@azstarnet.com.