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BEL Donates \$5,000 to BEL Minorettes as the Band Celebrates its 45th Anniversary

Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) has reaffirmed its support for the BEL Minorettes Marching Band by donating \$5,000 to the band as it celebrates its 45th anniversary this year. BEL became a proud sponsor of the Minorettes in 2003 and has since contributed over \$23,000 to the band, most of which has been used to purchase musical instruments and uniforms.



BEL Minorettes take time out for a photo shoot after a 2004 performance in Benque Viejo Town.

According to Band Manager Rita Flowers, this has meant a world of meaningful difference for band members who range from primary school to high school age students. “With corporate backing from BEL, we have been able to improve our image and the level of our performance considerably,” said Flowers. “Band members’ appreciation for the support BEL has given will translate into high energy and enthusiasm when they hit the streets during this year’s road marches.”

The 75-member band is divided into four departments: Twirlers, Directors, Flags and Musicians. They have won first place in five national “Battle of the Band” competitions, including the last one which was held in 2002.

Speaking on the strict policies of the Minorettes, Flowers said, “The guiding principle of the band is to build self-esteem and encourage creativity among members who in return are expected to be good role models to their peers.”

The Minorettes Marching Band was formed in 1960 by civil servant and nationalist Brian Pitts of the Volunteer Guard of the Belize Defence Force and has been managed by Flowers for the past 42 years. The band's motto is: *Education, Dedication, Compassion, Discipline, Self-Esteem, Respect and Communication*. Their uniform is patterned after BEL's logo colors, which are green, yellow and white.

The band's first two performances for this year both take place on Saturday, September 10 in Belize City:

10th September Street Parade – begins at 10:00 a.m. from Marine Parade Boulevard into North Park Street into North Front Street (contrary to vehicular traffic) across Bel China Bridge into Vernon Street into Magazine Road into Cemetery Road into Orange Street into Albert Street and ends at Yarborough Road.

Carnival Road March – begins at 3:00 p.m. from Caesar Ridge Road into Central American Boulevard into Princess Margaret Drive and ends at Marion Jones Sporting Complex.

The band is also scheduled to participate in the Independence Day Uniform Parades in Belize City and Orange Walk Town on September 21.

END